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CLYTIA

A ROMANCE

OF THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY

BY

GEORGE TAYLOR

Author of "Antinous."

(Professor Hausrath of Heidelberg)

FROM THE GERMAN BY MARY J. SAFFORD

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CLYTIA.

CHAPTER I.

WHILE, in the north of Germany, keen winds were blowing and chill night frosts kept the budding foliage from breaking into leaf, the valley of the Rhine, between Bergstrasse and Hardtgebirge, had enjoyed for several weeks the early Spring which is the great advantage of this garden of the country. Three hundred years ago, the period at which the scene of this story is laid, the valley of the Neckar, where it joins the lowlands of the Rhine, was ablaze with the red and white blossoms of the fruit-trees and yellow fields of sweet naphew, as if Spring had sought to try the effect of an illumination in broad daylight. True, the Jettenbühl above Heidelberg, now resembling a green velvet cushion on which the castle-ruins rest like a consecrated offering to Deity, was then a bare glacis, crowned by massive towers and fortification walls projecting in rectangular lines or obtuse angles, while the electoral castle of the palsgrave towered like a frowning fortress above the fertile valley of Heidelberg, as the gloomy papal citadel now dominates pleasant Avignon or threatening Ehrenbreitstein rises above the green Rhine. The superb castle of Frederick IV. and Frederick V.

did not then gleam between the octagonal belfry and the "thick tower," of which only a few ruins of the inner wall exist at the present day, but at the right the pointed gables of the chapel and the roof of the ancient castle appeared above the scarps and walls, while the "new palace" built by Frederick II. adjoined the octagonal tower.

Late in the afternoon of a spring day in 1570 a throng of people seeking audience with the Elector Frederick III. filled the low-vaulted halls of this edifice, whose blending of Gothic and Renaissance architecture recalls the Flemish taste of those days. The stately Bachmann, an officer of the household, whose good-natured face formed a pleasant contrast to the grim lions on the coat-of-arms upon his breast, stood, clad in the rich official dress of the haiducks of the palatinate, before his master's door, solemnly calling in turn the name of each individual admitted. Embassadors from the French Huguenots asking for aid, and warmly recommended Saxon theologians who presented to the elector books opposing Calvinism, wandering Scotchmen seeking service, and Italian artists who had obtained commissions, were successively received and dismissed. At last only two very dissimilar couples remained, representatives of the two classes who, like living embodiments of hope and lamentation, everywhere fill the anterooms of the great.

The two "hopeful" ones were talking eagerly together as they walked up and down the empty hall, while the two sorrowful visitors sat sullenly in the corner. One, a short, stout person with a fresh, ruddy face and rugged features was addressed as Herr Pastor. His companion, a slender, impish fellow, whose dark

clothing seemed ill-suited to a face that showed traces of constant wine-drinking — a figure such as is often met at the funerals of circus-riders — sighed mournfully as he said :

“ Yes, yes, Herr Pastor. How often in the late Count Palatine's reign I've shortened the time for the gentlemen waiting here, and even if they received unfavorable answers they laughed at my good jokes. I little thought then that I should ever sit here myself to beg for a pension.”

“ We both owe our misfortune to that vagabond Olevianus,” said the pastor. “ Because I conquered him in public disputation — he knows about as much of theology as your cow of playing the bagpipes — and because he could not bear to see what full congregations I had, he deprived me of my place in Peterskirche and assigned me to take charge of the morning services in the Geistkirche, which nobody ever attends. But it will do no good, the people of Heidelberg are to choose to-day between me and Olevianus, and I'll see who gets most votes. He knows it too, that's why I'm to be crushed. So I want to have an audience and tell the elector the plain truth, though he may not like to hear it.”

“ Our day is over, Herr Neuser,” said the court-jester, “ those are the people in luck now,” and he motioned angrily towards the other couple, an elderly Italian very handsomely dressed, whose face resembled that of a fox as he glanced watchfully round listening intently, while talking eagerly, and a much younger man whose long locks and velvet Raphael cap gave him the appearance of an artist. “ That's one of the needy wretches the Italian doctor brings here. He

hasn't drunk a single bottle of wine at the Stag all the week. The dandy doubtless has a letter of recommendation in his pocket from Herr Beza for a position in the privy council or consistory."

"He ought to have applied sooner," replied the pastor; "the martyrs from Trier, Paris, and Prague snapped up all those dainty tit-bits long ago."

"Well, then, he'll be paid for not letting the wolves eat the moon or the citizens of Heilbronn set fire to the Neckar; bread and offices can always be had here for Italians."

"Come in, gentlemen, come in, honored rabble," said the pastor in the tone of a quack-doctor crying his wares. "Here you may see Boquin, Ramus, and Du Jon, Tremelli and Zanchi, Ursinus the Silesian and Zuleger the Bohemian, Olevianus from the Lower Rhine, van Keulen, Pittopöus, Dathen, Marnix, and all the rest of them. But there's no longer room for an honest Swabian, we can go."

The faces of the worthy pair would have brightened very little, if they had understood the words with which Professor Pigavetta, the hospital surgeon, using as a measure of precaution the Italian language, was pressing his views upon young Felice Laurenzano. "Consider what you owe the society," he said eagerly; "it has educated you, sent you to Flanders that you might learn a different method of work from the one prevailing in Rome and Florence, assigned you to Meister Colins, whose letter of recommendation so honorably introduces you here."

"Eccellenza," replied the young architect, "even without a reminder, I shall recollect what the reverend Fathers have done for me and my brother. Only tell

me how I can show my gratitude to the college. Unfortunately, I'm such an absent-minded mortal and so accustomed to go through the world as if I were in a dream, that I'm afraid I might not see the opportunity in time, though ingratitude was never one of my failings."

"That is a very simple matter, my son," replied the old man. "You must keep watch for any occasion to introduce one of our party at this court. You must inform us of everything you think may be of interest to the holy Church, and if important commissions are entrusted to you, tell me of them, that I may instruct you how to execute them. Even here the Church does not give up her cause for lost. The Elector Ludwig is by no means satisfied with his father's innovations. As soon as the reigning prince is dead, Calvinism will be as carefully uprooted as it is now zealously planted, and then much will depend upon our having a party here that will stand by us. I have battled for our holy Church in more difficult places. If we do not succeed in instantly restoring her to her rights, we shall be content if only her enemy's colony does not increase. 'Sails must be set according to the wind,' said the late Father Ignatius. The elector is about to introduce the Calvinistic church discipline here, but it will be hard for him to accustom the population of this huge vineyard they call the Palatinate to water-drinking and Calvinistic psalm-singing. To be at home an hour after sunset, to neither carouse, gamble, nor swear, to sit on Sunday and repeat the catechism will be a difficult lesson to beat into the bullet-heads of the worthy inhabitants of the Palatinate. Cholerick Olevianus and honest Ursinus shall yet learn that it is easier to write a catechism than

to teach the Heidelberg people the habit of water-drinking. As soon as the members of the consistory have the elector's signature, our time to act will begin. I must now go to the Imperial Diet at Speyer, while you reconnoitre the battle-field here, support all the foes of church discipline in their opposition, and make as much trouble for the government as possible. Here, too, the point in question is first to prevent the situation becoming permanent,—to be constantly upholding the weaker against the stronger. If the heretics see that their territories are never at rest, they will return at the first opportunity to the fold of the Holy Father, who alone can give them peace."

The young Italian had intently watched his patron as he poured forth these words in low, eager tones; but his eyes had only noted the changing expression of the face, the marked countenance of the zealot, following his every gesture and movement, while his fingers twitched as if he were moulding a lump of clay and bringing out features in the plastic material.

"What a model he would be for my picture of Cassius persuading Brutus to the murder of Caesar," thought the young man. "The eloquence, the fanatical expression, the cunning, persuasive pantomime!"

His companion looked enquiringly at him, as if he expected an assent. A deep flush crimsoned the artist's face as he answered hastily: "Certainly, certainly." He tried to collect his thoughts but only grew more absent-minded, and while the politician continued to explain the praiseworthy designs of the Society of Jesus towards the Palatinate, his memory recalled an incident of his childhood. His teacher at Naples was just going to praise him for having at least listened to her long lec-

ture with commendable attention, when he very inopportunely pointed his little finger at her thin neck and said: "Granny, there's such a funny ball that always goes up and down in your throat when you talk." At that time he received his first box on the ear from the incensed preceptress. He could not help smiling to think how little he had improved since then. As his noble patron remained silent, the young man, rousing himself from his abstraction, said: "I am only an artist who sees colors, lines, and forms, but I cannot look with a statesman's eyes."

"Well," replied Pigavetta, "your brother Paolo, Signor Felice, has more taste for politics. You need only tell him all you see with your falcon eyes; he'll draw his own inferences and report to me. He knows where I am to be found in Speyer."

Just at that moment the haiduck approached: "His Royal Highness has ordered that you two gentlemen shall be the last received, the audience will then be over."

"Come," said Pigavetta to the young man, "and answer boldly. The elector likes frankness." So they went to the audience-chamber, while the pastor and his companion sullenly retired.

CHAPTER II.

IN an oak-wainscotted room, with a moderately-high ceiling and large round-paned windows, was an open desk, beautifully inlaid and adorned with mottoes and allegorical figures, at which the Elector Frederick

III. was standing. A Dutch-tile stove of rude German workmanship, representing the history of the world from Adam and Eve to the Emperors Charles V. and Francis I. afforded the stout, heavy sovereign a solid support. Pigavetta, bowing respectfully, said: "I have brought Your Highness the young artist whom you authorized me to summon."

A short, thickset figure, somewhat short of breath, approached the young man. A wide ruff, which looked like a plate, surrounded the place where the neck is usually found, and above it appeared a steadfast, honest face with a yellow beard. The heavy features were animated by a pair of bright blue eyes, very pleasant to see. The stout little man's features expressed honesty, loyalty, and a clear conscience, rather than intellectual versatility or talent.

At the window, clad in a dark Spanish costume, stood Thomas Liebler, surnamed Erastus, the elector's physician — at that period the most influential person in the electorate, though his interference in church matters was very unwillingly tolerated by the great theologians of the city.

"You have been well recommended to me, Meister Laurenzano," said the elector kindly, pointing to the building plans, estimates, and documents that lay piled before him. Meister Colins represents you to be a second Michael Angelo. You are artist, sculptor, and architect, and your hazel eyes say that you write poetry too."

"Whoever wishes to build," replied the Italian in broken German, which greatly amused the elector, "must be able to draw and carve. I would not venture to call myself an architect in my own home, if I did not understand both."

“Well spoken, young man, and you’ll find opportunity for both talents here. When I assumed the government of this country I found empty coffers, and instead of money the splendid building yonder, which robbed me of my rest day and night, for I did not know how I could finish it without neglecting more necessary things. It was a misfortune to the country. Look out into this court-yard. My ancestors’ homes seem like old barns beside this Italian palace the Count Palatine Ottheinrich erected here. Who will want to live in Ruprechtsbau, the palace of Louis V. or even the new palace, when this fairy castle is always in sight?”

The youth, unheeding the elector’s wrath, was gazing with unconcealed delight through the open window at the exquisite scene before him. The sun was shining brightly into the spacious court-yard, which resembled a walled piazzetta. Low, gloomy, fortress-like buildings stood ranged in irregular order along the southern and western sides, but on the east the Ottheinrichsbau, illuminated by the setting sun, towered aloft like some fairy palace beheld in dreams, the dark blue sky behind it making the red sandstone glow as if irradiated by some light within, while columns, pilasters, consoles, and statues seemed hewn from some wondrous precious stone, half jasper, half ruby.

“What a material!” cried the young artist enthusiastically.

“This accursed palace is like every other unsuitable gift,” the elector continued. “My wife once placed a Turkish carpet and embroidered curtains, presented by the Voyvode, in the maids of honors’ room. Instantly the old wainscoting no longer suited the young ladies, they wanted Flemish tapestry; new tables and chairs fol-

lowed, in short the new carpet gradually thrust all the old furniture out of the room. It will be just the same with this castle. Already my wife thinks the old chapel too gloomy and clumsy beside the new building. Perhaps you will live to see my son replace the House of God where my ancestors prayed, with one of the new-fangled Pagan temples with a gable-roof and dome, then the palace of the illustrious Emperor Ruprecht will no longer find favor in his descendants' eyes and give way to a new residence. In short, this castle of my predecessor will yet devour the marrow of the country; the Counts Palatine and their wives, when living in a royal palace, will dream of royal crowns and bring misfortune on themselves and the palatinate. Until now the happiness of the land has been owing to the fact that its rulers knew their boundaries. That's why I hate this building and, if I were a man of conscience, would set fire to it myself some night and burn the whole carved casket to the ground."

Pigavetta listened with a sarcastic smile to the frank outburst of the sovereign's wrath, then with a slight shade of irony in his tone, asked: "So this young man's commission will be to tear down the new building?"

"No," replied the elector, while his blue eyes flashed an angry glance from beneath their bushy brows at the insolent Italian. "Since we have kept a tight hand on the purse strings, we have saved enough to finish it, for the experts say something must be done or the beautiful work will suffer. Meister Alexander Colins has recommended you; for he himself promised our most gracious emperor to accept no other work until he had finished the Emperor Max's monument at Innsbruck.

You have worked under him and therefore can best execute his plans."

"It will be a great honor to me," replied the young Italian modestly. "to complete a building, whose façade, I have been told, the immortal Michael Angelo helped design, and whose sculptures were carved by my teacher, Colins."

"Yes, yes, the sculptures," panted the elector, throwing himself into an arm-chair, "I was discussing them with my worthy council yesterday. We must begin with them. There is the memorandum of my consistory. The gentlemen really lectured me for tolerating Pagan deities on my own roof and letting the planetary gods look in at my windows, and as the rigid Olevianus has heard from you, Herr Pigavetta, that the work is to be taken up again, the divines demand the removal of these statues.

"Insolent crew!" muttered Pigavetta.

"Nay," said the elector, "we want no guardians of God's House, who cannot bark. My predecessor had his monument removed from the Geistkirche when the deacon Klebitz told him that he could not have nude figures and marble statues of the wise virgins of the Gospel in his church. I will not be more obstinate than my noble cousin. The matter came up in this way," he continued, turning to the architect. "The theologians are now in Jena, eagerly endeavoring to reveal the errors of Magister Philippus Melancthon, and have rightfully blamed this devout man for paying too much attention to astrology, which is a Pagan and Jewish art and merely panders to sinful curiosity. Both Luther and Calvin have rebuked him for it. But our great Genève teacher has no opinion of statues,

so the figures of the planets, which stand up yonder, are doubly objectionable to the members of the consistory."

Felix shrugged his shoulders impatiently — an outbreak of the hot-blooded Neapolitan's rage seemed imminent.

"I don't think we need remove all the statues," said the elector soothingly. "The holy men and heroes of the Old Covenant in the niches below can offend no one, and though the Pagan Hercules cuts a strange figure between Samson and King David, his face is so pious and gentle that it awakens edifying feelings in me every morning. Besides, he is a good match for Samson, who holds the jaw-bone of the ass in his right hand and the dead lion in the left, and was himself a Hercules of the people of Israel. Above them you see the five virtues — Strength breaking the column, Justice with the sword and scales, Faith, Hope, and Charity; but Charity is the noblest of all, so she stands over the entrance. Even strict Olevianus cannot object to that. But in the third row above stand the planetary gods; Saturnus, who is about to eat the infant, Mars, Venus, Mercury, and Diana, the goddess of the moon, while highest of all, up there where my physician Erastus lives with his pretty little daughter, who is just drawing her fair head back into the window, are Jupiter and the sun-god Serapis with his crown of rays. These are the ones which offend the divines."

"I, too," now interposed stately Erastus, "am no friend to astrology and, as Your Highness knows, have written a book against it, but the point in my colleagues' advice that vexes me is the way in which the members of the consistory go through your country

with spy-glasses as if they wanted to find some cause for complaint. The figures up above there can scarcely be distinguished with the naked eye, and no simple Christian is aware that they represent the sun, moon, and planets, from whose conjunction the late Count Palatine augured the happiness or unhappiness of men, and to whose protection he therefore committed his house. If it were not known that Magister Philippus had aided the late elector in selecting the figures, the theologians would never have thought of troubling themselves about them. But they want to slay a victim to their hatred of statues, and increase their importance among their brethren in Geneva and Scotland, by showing how they rule their royal master and even apply their church discipline to his princely house."

Felix had not only listened to the speaker with interest, but took advantage of the opportunity to look more closely at the elector's statesman, who was already well known to him by name. He saw a tall, stately man with a resolute, imperious glance. Even in external appearance the tall figure presented a marked contrast to the short, stout, honest-hearted German prince, a contrast that would have been entirely to Erastus' advantage, had not Nature herself spoiled her own masterpiece. Erastus' right arm hung stiffly by his side. It had been paralyzed from his birth, and — a still more striking peculiarity — the physician's hair was lighter than the dark face it framed, so that he resembled a grey-haired negro. Intimate friends therefore called him "the Moor;" enemies, of which the resolute man had not a few, nicknamed him "the black devil." "Our Lord writes a plain hand," said his foe Olevianus, as he saw him in the distance.

"Yes, yes," replied the milder Ursinus, "he is marked by God."

The elector smiled as he listened to his friend's words and then said good-naturedly: "You are hostile to the consistory, Erastus, because you are subject to them in matters of church discipline. But I have always heard Ottheinrich praised for altering his monument, when it had become a rock of offence, because he did not wish the theologians to dispute over his grave. I will not show less consideration for the weak than he. We will remove the figures, Meister Laurenzano," he continued, turning to the architect; "I think we might supply their places in the empty niches by the animal on our escutcheon, the lion of the Palatinate."

The young Italian crossed himself and muttered an indistinct "*Gesumaria*" between his set teeth, but the corpulent elector continued: "I thought you might put in the first niche the lion holding a sword, the emblem of his protection of the country, in the second the lion reading a book, for there is great need that my subjects should pay more heed to our catechism, which is so well armed with the principles of Holy Writ that no sophistry of the Papists has yet been able to convict it of error." The Catholic artist again crossed himself. "In the third niche, let him offer a goblet as a symbol of the noble vintage of the country."

"*Dio mio*," cried the Italian in an outburst of wrath. "Your Highness can set fire to the Ottheinrich palace for aught I care, but I will sooner cut off my hand than thus mutilate the creation of Michael Angelo and Colin."

"Be more respectful, young man," said the elector frowning, "you are speaking to a prince."

"And you, Your Highness," said the Italian, "respect the princes of the kingdom of beauty. Do you know why I left Rome, my lord? The Pope had been told that the nude figures in the great altar-piece in his private chapel disturbed the prayers of devout women, and believing it, ordered neck-handkerchiefs and trousers to be painted on the beautiful forms in Michael Angelo's finest picture. The man who did it is now known throughout Italy as *il brachatore*, the breeches-painter. I turned my back upon the Holy City then in wrath, and have little inclination for the renown of being called the Palatine cat-painter."

"The young man is right," said Erastus. "I most urgently warn Your Highness against yielding to the theologians' demands. They began with the outside of houses, because they must not tolerate 'a public scandal' as they say, then will come private offences within the walls, till at last they'll peer into every house-wife's pot, and, like the emissaries of the consistory at Geneva, even regulate what the people may eat and drink. This alleged scandal has no other object. These statues are no gods, no one worships them, no one has ever found any cause of offence in them. They stand within the enclosed court-yard of my gracious prince, and nothing but Olevianus' priestly longing to try his church discipline on his sovereign's household dictated this unseemly demand from the consistory."

"So you will carve no lions?" asked the elector, turning to the young artist.

"*No! mai*," replied the latter, waving his cap in a farewell salutation, but a sign from his companion reminded him in whose presence he was standing, and with a courteous bow, he added: "Meister Colins was

my teacher, Sire. Should I not be a wretch to destroy something into which he has wrought a part of his life, while even a man like Raphael left Sodoma's pictures in the Pope's apartments, though he could have replaced them with far better ones, solely because he respected the life-work of a man with whom he had studied."

Frederick III. shook his head angrily, then went to the window and gazed intently at the pediment, now glowing in golden radiance under the last beams of the setting sun. The topmost row of statues was steeped in light, while the lower half of the building lay in shadow, and the planetary gods looked so cheerily down upon the old prince that he himself felt a vague doubt whether his Palatine lions would be as pleasing there. "This edifice will always be a fair foreigner in my kingdom," he said sighing; "what am I to do with a palace that is too beautiful for my own escutcheon?"

Laurenzano had also gone to the window and again glanced at the arrangement of the statues. "I know the original home of this work of art," said he. "Meister Gherardo Doceno painted almost the same succession of figures as a frieze on a nobleman's house in Florence. The façade has some serious defects, but it is impossible to omit even one of the figures without marring the idea of the whole. Strength and heroism are the foundation on which the magnificence of a royal house is to rest. These qualities are symbolized by the heroes and giants who support the whole. The virtues which should adorn a princely race are placed, as the principal ornament, in the centre. But a higher power, to which the members of the royal family should look up, rules over all, and this power is here repre-

sented by the sun, moon, and planets, through which God governs the day and night. Does your Royal Highness believe it would be less idolatrous if the scions of this princely house should see only the lions of their own escutcheon in the highest place?"

The last argument, which appealed to the elector's modest, devout disposition, made an impression. He glanced in surprise at the daring artist, and it was evident that the remark had produced an effect.

"Do not remove them, I beseech you," pleaded the young Italian, with the touching fervor of a Southern nature. "How many works of art have already been destroyed within the last fifty years in Germany. Some you have shattered because they were Papistical, others because they were Pagan or immoral — what remain? In Augsburg I wanted to see Albert Dürer's figures — they had been destroyed during the church reformation. In Basle I enquired for Hans Holbein's pictures of the saints — they had been whitewashed, that no one should worship idols. Must this go on, Your Highness? The churches stand bereft of their images, must the castles of princes become equally bare? Why have you summoned me from Innsbruck where I was the master's right hand, if I must offer him a mortal insult here? Why do you need sculptors, if you want neither images nor emblems?"

"Not of heavenly things, young man," replied the elector.

"By the Redeemer's blood!" cried the Italian, "must we all our lives, like Meister Lucas Cranach of Weimar, paint instead of saints and angels, the angular faces of theologians and the pumpkin-shaped heads of the dukes of Saxony?"

"Stop, stop, stop, my young enthusiast," cried the old elector laughing, "don't let my daughter hear what you say about Johann Friedrich's beauty. But I see by your bluntness that you are an honest fellow, though they say in Germany that the Italians are all smooth-tongued rascals. You have convinced me. We'll leave the Planets where they are; and you, Erastus, can write to the consistory that their prince also knows what gives cause for scandal and prefers to reform his house himself; the gentlemen can do the same with theirs."

This commission evoked a smile of satisfaction, which made the physician's teeth glitter in striking contrast to his dark face. "Meister Felix can move to-day into some of the front rooms in the Ruprechtsbau," continued the elector. "He will then have the new palace constantly before his eyes and see where repairs are needed, for our predecessor's legacy, whether valuable or not, must be preserved. You shall paint the Lion of the Palatinate, reading the catechism, for our university. I thank you for your mediation," he continued, turning to Pigavetta. "I am pleased with your choice."

When the doors of the audience-chamber had closed behind the pair, Pigavetta patted his companion's shoulder and the foxy smile again appeared on his face as he said: "You managed that very well, my young friend."

"Did I?" replied Felix. "I never thought of it."

"It is the blessing of a proper frame of mind that it unconsciously perceives what is required, on all occasions, to promote the interests of our holy Church.

Only keep to the rule of everywhere baffling the heretics. I've already told you that nothing must be permitted to take firm root here. Whoever may win or lose does not matter to us, so long as no one obtains a secure foothold. There will be long faces in the consistory to-morrow when Erastus' letter arrives, for the learned pedant never spares pepper and salt. I knew my worthy Olevianus would enter into the snare, when I mentioned the excellent opportunity to get rid of the abomination up yonder, and already enjoy in anticipation the sight of his angry face. Boquin, the court-preacher, will yelp loudly and President Zuleger will say: 'there we have it.' "

The triumphant Jesuit was just leaving the ante-room when he heard Erastus' voice call behind him: "Doctor Pigavetta, His Highness wants to give you some commissions for Speyer." Pigavetta hastily returned to the elector's room, while Erastus and Felix went down-stairs to the court-yard.

"You have rendered an important service to all friends of art and to my gracious prince's reputation; nay, to me also, young sir, and by way of thanks, I'll give you a piece of good advice."

"What is that?"

"You are in bad company. What binds you to this surgeon?"

Felix hesitated a moment, but secrecy was not one of his traits of character. "I made the doctor's acquaintance in the college at Venice. He obtained a place for my brother in the Institute and the application to Colins, which brought me here, was by his recommendation. I owe him a debt of gratitude, as you see."

"We have had few tests of his honesty at the university, and he likes to have a hand in everything that is going on. It is news to me that the gentleman is connected with the Society of Jesus. The Brothers of Ignatius do not usually indulge in boasting, like this eccentric statesman. Were you educated in the college too?"

"The Laurenzano family is noble, but impoverished. So, after our parents' death, the relatives decided to place my brother in the charge of the holy Fathers. I followed him to Venice, where I worked in Meister Jacopo Sansovino's studio, and the rector allowed me to attend the lectures, which were of great advantage to me. I shall never forget with what zeal I was taught mathematics, the languages, and philosophy, nothing being asked in return except that I should adorn the chapel with my pictures. Nowhere have I seen greater self-sacrifice, more diligence in developing pupils' talents to the utmost."

"For the use and profit of the Pope," said Erastus coldly.

"All our gifts are bestowed to do honor to the holy Church," answered Felix. "Besides, you knew I was a Catholic when you sent for me."

"Certainly, Meister Felix. We cannot have Otto Heinrich's statues repaired by Ursinus' baccalaureates or the doctors of the Institute, and the Heidelberg artists are now so much engrossed by ecclesiastical disputes and politics that soon no one will understand his profession. So we must apply to the Papists. You can practise the rites of your religion in the privacy of your own apartments as you choose. But how does it happen that your brother Paul occupies the pulpit of an

evangelical preacher, since he seems to me to be as much a Catholic at heart as yourself?"

Felix cast a startled glance at the keen-sighted physician, then recovering his self-control, answered:

"I have not seen my brother for two years."

Erastus shook his head. "There are often great changes at that age. I am interested in the young man, nay I feel a thrill of sympathy whenever I see him. He is as handsome as you are, perhaps handsomer, but his face wears no expression of happiness and peace. I will serve you if I can, we shall be neighbors. I live over yonder in the 'new building,' as the elector often needs my medical advice. My quarters are tolerably high for a crippled man — I am lodged between Jupiter and Serapis and look over the heads of all the planets and Christian virtues. You have done me a favor by sparing me the view of seven lions' tails. Besides, I like all Italians. I spent nine years in Bologna and Padua, and received much kindness from your countrymen. So come and see me soon; Erastus' advice will do you no harm in this Heidelberg, where all sorts of factions and warfare have sprung up since the inhabitants, during the last twenty years, have alternated four times between three religions."

"Bachmann," he called to the old servant, who stood leaning against a well-house whose roof was supported by lofty pillars, "this gentleman will occupy the two apartments next to the pages' room. See that his luggage is brought up from the Stag." Then he cordially shook hands with the young artist and bade him farewell. The latter gazed admiringly after his new patron. "A model for a Regulus," he murmured as he followed

the broad-shouldered Bachmann, who, jingling his bunch of keys, led the way upstairs.

CHAPTER III.

THE full moon, sailing over the Königstuhl, was pouring her soft light upon the gables and crooked streets of the ancient city, when the Italian surgeon left the palace and went down through the town to his lodgings at the Klingenthor. A clear little fountain at the right of the dark gate-way was plashing cheerily, and the water in its basin flashed back the silvery moon-beams. The tall figure of a young priest stood at the open window of a little balconied room close by. His eyes rested sorrowfully on the shimmering light, then wandered to Peterskirche, whose vast nave looked still more huge in the moon-rays, while his ears caught the confused roar of the noisy city, the mingled din of drunkards' voices, the shrill screams of maid-servants, and the ear-splitting notes of tavern-bands.

"What aileth thee now, that thou art wholly gone up to the house-tops? 'Thou that art full of stirs, a tumultuous city, a joyous city; thy slain men are not slain with the sword," murmured the young priest in the words of the Prophet Isaiah.

Sounds from the Neckar now blended with the uproar from the streets;—cornet-players and fifers were plying their instruments on the illuminated ship that was bringing the elector's guests to the landing-place on the bridge, while the salutes fired by the vessel

flashed upon the night and crashed echoing through the valley.

"Oh, that 'Thou wouldst come down, that the mountains might tremble before 'Thee," sighed the pale priest.

Just at that moment he heard a quick step coming along the street and directly after Pigavetta's voice called from below: "I've kept you waiting a long time, my dear Magister, but there seemed no end to His Highness' scruples to-day. I'll come up immediately." A key turned in the heavy lock, and shortly after the distinguished surgeon, holding a lighted lamp, entered the lofty balconied room and, with Italian grace, offered his hand to his countryman, who reluctantly placed his long, thin fingers in it. "I bring you good news, Magister Paul," Pigavetta continued; "your brother is here and was kindly received by the elector." Young Laurenzano eagerly raised his head, and the exclamation, "*Felice!*" escaped his thin, pale lips like a cry of joy. But he said no more and the old expression of melancholy submission returned as he passed his hand over his high forehead.

"You are thinking," said Pigavetta in the tone of a man of the world, "that it is not seemly for a monk to make a relative's return a cause for rejoicing, and that Ignatius forbids us to regard kinsmen in any other light than as a means of profit to the Church and her holy cause; but, my friend, we are often better Jesuits for being less strictly governed by the rules. You need not hide your feelings in my presence."

"My brother will be useful to me," said the young man curtly. Then he took from his pocket a number of papers and laid them in Pigavetta's hands. "Here

are the reports of the state of religion in the chapter ; here is what I have been able to learn concerning religious affairs in the families of my pupils without exciting suspicion. Here are the astronomical calculations so far as I could compute them from the tables, in default of other aids."

"Let us sit down, my dear Magister," said Pigavetta, throwing himself into a chair and kindly pressing the young priest into another. "You are not satisfied with your position?" he asked familiarly.

"All excuses, all procrastination have proved useless," said Paul sadly. "I was forced yesterday to promise to conduct my teaching according to the principles of the Augsburg confession and the electoral catechism. You know I cannot do that, so release me from this position."

"You are not obliged to fulfil your promise, since you did not mean to keep it when you made it."

"But the gown of a heretical preacher chokes me."

"Well, my dear young friend, I am ready to remove this Nessus shirt at once, if you are apt at other tasks."

The pale young priest fixed his large black eyes eagerly on his superior.

"A tutor for the young Counts Palatine is wanted," the latter continued. "You are known to be a good teacher, I will recommend you for the post, but the young princes can be of little service to us, unless you can obtain some influence with the new electress and the sovereign himself. I have been informed by letter that she has a taste for the kabbala and astrology. That is probably the reason the portly elector inveighed so vehemently to-day against the noble science, by

which so many a court-chaplain has guided his master through life. Do you know anything about it?"

"I can decipher the *rota vitæ et mortis*," said Paul Laurenzano sullenly, "draw the horoscope, and calculate the aspects — the rest can be learned, if you will get me the books and instruments."

"There shall be no lack of those, but you must not take the study of these follies too seriously. I have sometimes seen the finest minds wrecked by the kabbala and astrology, for when once accustomed to traverse these starry paths they are reluctant to return to earth. The young electress has two starry eyes better worth gazing at than Sirius and Jupiter, and yours are not amiss either," he added smiling pleasantly. "Once win the young wife and we can do what we choose with the elector; that is," he added unctuously, "what the advancement of our holy Church demands. A ruler of sixty, who weds a youthful widow, is a lost man. The Widow Brederode brought him all the charms of girlhood without its inexperience; so the good old creature is doubly lost. You are young and handsome, she cannot fail to prefer you to her fat German spouse. So we will bring the old man to do what you read in the stars, and what that shall be we will settle in the observatory here" — he pointed through the window to the tower of the Klingenthor.

Paul made an impatient gesture of refusal, but Pigavetta quietly continued: "Other secret sciences might not be amiss. The elector is in debt. Ottheinrich has lived riotously and Simmern was always in want. Suppose we should establish a laboratory? You must undertake to fix metals, make gold, collect shooting-stars to extract the *materia prima*, gather night-dew in pails

that the electress may bathe her white neck in it. — You will find me a good teacher, I have shown you that I'm no simpleton. I'll instruct you — in white magic of course," he added with marked emphasis, glancing keenly at Paul, "not in the Black Art."

"Permit me to let both alone. It might suit some people to turn white into black, and I did not vow to spread diabolical arts and idolatry through Germany."

al "Idolatry !" cried Pigavetta. "You talk like a Calvinist. In religious matters, we do not care for what is true, but what is effectual. When directed towards the right ~~goal~~, faith in the philosopher's stone and the elixir of life invented by Bombastus Paracelsus may bear as rich fruits for our holy Church as belief in the scapulary of St. Francis, or the bones of the Apostles."

The young priest remained obstinately silent ; a bitter, contemptuous expression rested on his pale lips.

Pigavetta frowned. "The air of this heretical city seems perilous to your vows, Brother Paul. Did you not promise to serve your Superior, mutely, implicitly, obediently, like the staff in his hand ? It seems to me you are relapsing into the spirit of refractoriness for which the Provincial once so sternly reprov'd you. I am sorry, but I shall not be able to praise your obedience when I send in my report of you."

The young priest bowed his head and sat staring silently into vacancy.

"Well," continued the older man in a gentler tone, "if you object to alchemy, we'll see what we can do with the stars. Our principal foe at this court is Erastus. Why am not *I* the fat ruler's physician ? Because the elector puts blind confidence in this black valet. Why have not the consistories yet been permitted to introduce

their church discipline, which would have infallibly driven the populace into our net? Because this Erastus warned the elector. Besides, he has written a book against astrology and is full of absurd zeal against the Chaldeans, as he calls us. If you succeed in winning the electress to study the stars — and a beautiful woman in her situation likes to stand at the telescope on a warm summer evening with a teacher of your appearance — there will be domestic warfare against the arrogant physician, and to find some means of getting Erastus out of the way shall be your task.”

A burning flush crimsoned Paul's cheeks and his labored breathing was distinctly audible as he listened to his Superior's wanton words. Did the proposal contain a subtle temptation for the young man, that he spoke in such hurried, gasping accents, sharp as the daggers of his countrymen: “Your theology daily grows more peculiar, Reverend Father. I thought it was written: ‘Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife.’”

Pigavetta cast a mocking glance at him. “*San Guiseppe!* what have I said? Besides, you would commit no mortal sin, since you do not aim at the destruction of the marriage sacrament, but only seek your own amusement and, in this case, the benefit of the Church. Here, too, I can do nothing but refer you to the life-rule of St. Ignatius: ‘Remarkable shrewdness and little sanctity is better than great sanctity and little shrewdness!’ You need not meet any advances from the fair one, as our General says: ‘A successful captor of souls must overlook many things by feigning obtuseness. *Prudens tempore illo tacebit.* But if you don't want the place, I know a dozen of the fraternity who will consider themselves fortunate to get it.”

"I will accept any position," replied the young man hastily, "that releases me from the duty of wearing the robes of heretic ministers and submitting to their customs. My real belief is no longer a secret to any one. Free me from this equivocal situation, and I will make myself as useful as possible."

"One thing more," said Pigavetta. "The rector's reports mention your remarkable skill in imitating hand-writing."

"I do not comprehend," replied the young man slowly, "why the rector had the best draughtsmen in the class acquire this dexterity, which Emperor Carl's code of laws punishes with the loss of the right hand. I shall not practise it."

"You will do what your Superiors command."

Paul sighed.

"I shall assign you no tasks save those for which I, and you also, can answer before God and man. Shall our envoys not be allowed to enter the dominions of the heretics because the magistrates will give them no passports, and is it a sin, when the eternal salvation of millions is at stake, to baffle the tyrant's insolent command by so innocent an art? Is not your Calvinistic ruff and the hair that has grown over your tonsure also a forged hand-writing? What put these notions into your brain?"

"I will not refuse to write a passport," replied the other in a hollow tone.

"Let me see what you can do," replied Pigavetta, pushing a sheet of paper and a pen towards his companion. Then, rummaging with apparent carelessness among a pile of papers, he took up a legal document. "Can you imitate this clerkly hand?"

Paul looked steadily at the characters, then asked :
“ What shall I write ? ”

“ Why, merely as a trial, anything you choose, this for aught I care :

“ Dear Herr Adam :

“ I have received your letters, and am entirely agreed. Matters are in an admirable condition ; you shall have the desired passport to-morrow, then follow my instructions exactly in everything, and remember me to the inspector.

“ Your friend.”

The young priest wrote the words, Pigavetta watching his fingers closely. “ *Optime, optime !* ” he cried. “ You are a great artist. I’ll prepare some forms shortly and you shall write credentials for all our agents.” Crumpling the note with apparent thoughtlessness, he put it in his pocket.

But the other said distrustfully : “ Give me back the paper. I don’t know what use you might make of it.”

“ I believe you are growing childish,” cried Pigavetta angrily. “ When was it a practice of St. Ignatius to have novices watch monks ? ” Taking out the crushed scrap of paper he flung it through the open window. “ How about your knowledge of French ? ” he added hastily. “ Countess Brederode, or as she must now be called, Her Highness the Electress Amalie is very particular on that point.”

“ She will be satisfied with me,” said Paul. “ But now dismiss me, it is growing late. To conceal these meetings, as you ordered, I told the canonesses that I was attending the preachers’ meetings at the Stag,

where I shall be bored to death but nevertheless must stay till midnight or I shall lose my reputation among the pious ladies."

Pigavetta held out his hand. "I hope you will soon be at the palace, the fair electress will make no objection if you tarry a little longer."

The young priest blushed and hurried out of the room. His hasty footsteps echoed through the window as he rushed into the darkness, finding the evening breeze all too soft to cool his burning temples. Pigavetta gazed scornfully after him. "'One can't fish without bait,' said the late Father Ignatius, and he is the only man who ever made an impression upon me. What is the use of knowing this worthy youth's confessions, if I don't attack him on his weak side? He looks as if he were on the point of an outbreak, so it will be well to lay a new chain on him." After a pause he added: "Aside from all higher purposes, it would be no bad sport to set this black panther on the white cat in yonder palace. It might introduce a little variety into this tiresome headquarters of heresy, where winter lasts five months and rainy weather the other seven." While speaking he carefully drew a crumpled paper from his pocket, laid another sheet on it and cautiously smoothed the first. When he had finished the work, he said: "There, after being exposed to the night-air a few times, this masterpiece of the worthy Magister will be perfectly smooth and then, Friend Erastus, you will swear yourself that you must have written the letter." After fastening the paper near the window with a stone he took the lamp and sought his couch, saying: "The instruction in writing given in Venice is really valuable. Now we have it in black and white that Erastus be-

longs to the Arians, and need not turn white into black as that pert young gosling piped."

CHAPTER IV.

NEXT morning the sun shone brightly into the little bay-window of the palace chamber occupied by Felice Laurenzano. Before him, veiled in the blue mist, stood Ottheinrichsbau and beyond it the dim outlines of the Königstuhl. Fragrant odors from the palace gardens floated into the open windows and the joyous songs of countless birds lured him into the fresh morning air. The young sculptor's spirits rose as, while dressing, his eyes rested steadily on the façade which was to be his future life-task. But to-day his first step must be to see the brother from whom he had so long been separated, and who now occupied a room in the chapter-house of Neuburg.

The young Jesuit's appointment in the evangelical institution of Neuburg had its history. The convent, half an hour's walk above Heidelberg, was so richly endowed with lands and so immediately under the elector's eye that it could not possibly have long escaped the "Reform." Frederick II. had already stretched his hands towards it and Ottheinrich enforced the abolition of processions and cloister life, and informed the nuns that they were no longer bound by their vows. A member of the Electoral Council was appointed superintendent, who confiscated the property of the convent for the electoral treasury, allowing the ladies

a moderate income. But when he attempted to also re-arrange their lives he encountered an unexpected power of resistance on the part of the persistent, obstinate sisterhood. As was the case everywhere, the nuns clung far more tenaciously to the old forms than the monks and priests. Women's minds found little pleasure in the dogmatic controversies of the reformers, and the Reformation wrested from the pious Sisters everything to which their hearts clung—their dress, their customary routine of life, their beloved pictures, and the chief comfort of their solitary lives—their hymns. To sing Matins and Vespers and listen to Mass had hitherto been their sole occupation, and in this peaceful, quiet existence they had been happy. Their hours, regularly divided between the "*Ave Maria*" and "*Salve regina*," had passed calmly on. Now a noisy rabble raged outside their gates and, contrary to their rules, the elector's arrogant ecclesiastical advisers forced a way into their quiet rooms to explain that their whole course of life was contrary to the gospel, and to destroy their peace of mind by enforced conversations on religious subjects. Startled from their easy, peaceful lives, the helpless women bitterly complained of the tyranny that forbade them the use of consecrated salt, wax-candles, incense, and everything appertaining to the honor of God, and no longer allowed them to sing the "*Regina coeli*," or the "*Maria mater gratiae*." Instead, these arrogant new-fashioned theologians with the broad white ruffs allowed the youngest novices to contradict their Lady Superior out of the Scripture; the servants were urged to break the commands of the Church, and when the convent-miller's child, whom the old ladies had loved and petted, died, they were not

permitted to give it extreme unction; it was suffered to die "like a beast" and was buried without incense or holy-water. The old nuns firmly believed that Satan himself instigated the wicked Luther and diabolical Calvin to such crimes, and never wearied of applying to all native and foreign patrons for aid in their sore need. But when a new ecclesiastical counsellor came from Heidelberg and ordered the Lady Superior and her nuns to relate their grievances, no further progress was made. Either they maintained an obstinate silence in the gentleman's presence, or they all shrieked at him at once, so that the only report he could make at Heidelberg was that the ladies wanted the old state of affairs restored and opposed a really diabolical resistance to the word of God. Ottheinrich now appointed a preacher to stay in the convent itself and convert them; but they protested against this violation of the sanctity of the cloister. The preacher took possession of the pulpit for the principal service, but he addressed empty benches and had scarcely left the chapel, when the nuns entered with holy water and censers, and after consecrating it anew, held a service of their own. The preacher closed the church, but they sang all the more exultingly in the chapter-hall. The superintendent took away their books, but they hunted up old ones in out-of-the-way corners and shrieked to Heaven till their weary throats could make no further sound. When these books were also confiscated, they sang from memory. They read the Services now in one locked room and now in another, and never did their *Salve regina* rise more loudly and shrilly to Heaven than when the superintendent and chaplain were standing outside, furiously demanding admittance in the name of the

elector. When the two gentlemen had thus come off losers, the Lady Superior and her nuns addressed a complaint to the elector that the men whom he had brought into the convent contrary to their rule, their honor, and all commendable custom, had attempted to force their way into the sisters' cells. In revenge the inspector took the tongues from their bells and cut the ropes, so that they could no longer ring their hours. Loud weeping and wailing echoed through the corridors of the convent and the inspector smiled as if listening to a merry little song, but when he went to his bed that evening he found it as wet as if rain had been pouring through the roof and as he went furiously down-stairs the next morning to investigate the offence, he stepped on some peas, fell and bruised himself severely. Then this mode of life seemed to him so uncomfortable that he resigned his place and returned to Heidelberg. The preacher was now entirely alone and consoled himself in his lonely room at the farthest end of the convent wall, but the lady superior at every little carouse drew up a protest, signed by numerous trustworthy male and female witnesses, and sent it to the court at Heidelberg, which instantly admonished the man, so that he, too, did not find life very enjoyable. Ottheinrich had watched this warfare with the utmost good-nature, and whenever a fresh instance of his inspector's wrath was reported the stout sovereign, whose back measured two feet and a half across from shoulder to shoulder, laughed so heartily that the dining-hall in the new palace shook. But he was succeeded by Frederick III., who took the "accursed idolatry of the Mass" more seriously. He ordered some of the most obstinate opposers of the faith to be sent to the hospital on the Dilsberg to nurse

the sick soldiers garrisoning the fortress. The old Lady Superior Brigitta was deprived of her staff and the Prioress Sabina von Pfalz-Zweibrücken was appointed in her place, solely because she promised to keep the peace and moreover was the elector's cousin. But the reform of church and convent was now unrelentingly accomplished. The sisters yielded to force because they could not do otherwise. Externally, the convent assumed an evangelical appearance, the Mass ceased to be held, the hymns to the honor of the Virgin and Saints were silenced, evangelical sermons were preached, and the Lord's Supper was given under both forms. The number of pupils whom the nuns were obliged to instruct in reading, writing, and feminine work was increased. The new abbess had been compelled to submit to all this, yet at heart the sisterhood remained Roman Catholics and secretly hoped for the coming of better times.

The new lady superior herself was a kindly, somewhat old-fashioned lady. Really as devout a Catholic as the others, she loved peace and wisely avoided conflicts with the stronger power. When the Palatinate turned from Lutheranism to Calvinism, public attention was more and more diverted from the convent, and the nuns ventured to hope that many a beloved custom might be restored if they could only get rid of the troublesome preacher. In fact the lady superior succeeded in persuading the electoral consistory to remove the old drunkard, as she called him. To avoid fresh quarrels, the indulgent elector permitted the sisters to choose from among the city ministers the one they liked best. After long consultation and hesitation they finally decided in favor of Meister Laurenzano of the Institute

who could also instruct the young girls the nuns were educating in the foreign languages.

"My pious cousin wants the youngest and best-looking," said the elector satirically, but he granted her wish, remarking: "They will become reconciled to the new religion all the more easily." This time, however, he had not penetrated the real connection of affairs and, cunning as the old sovereign looked, was himself deceived. Yet he gave orders that Magister Laurenzano should sometimes preach in the castle chapel "to see on what fare the young girls were fed, for the point was not a bit of meat, but the salvation of human souls."

Paul's conversion to Calvinism was a new thing to Meister Felix, and his position as preacher troubled him the more because, from Pigavetta's words, he could not help believing that his brother only feigned faith in the new religion to spy upon the heretics. In Felix's eyes, their education in the Jesuit college had always been a dispensation which had brought nothing but good results to him, nothing but evil to Paul. So a touch of sympathy and compassion blended with his love for his younger brother, rendering him gentle and indulgent to the irritable young priest, who possessed great intellectual gifts, but also required a vast amount of patience. Felix was as ignorant whether Paul had taken binding vows to the Order as he was of his reason for assuming the character of a Calvinist parson. "*Poveretto!*" he sighed. "I never understood his reserved nature, but Erastus' way of speaking of him distinctly showed me that he bears some new sorrow which needs assuaging. Poor Paolo, the planetary gods up yonder must have formed a very complicated conjunction when you were born!"

While speaking Felix threw on his cloak and turned down the front of his Raphael cap as a protection from the sun. He gaily trolled his favorite song, but the "Nina, Ninetta, Nina," involuntarily stuck in his throat as he entered the gloomy gate-way of the watch-tower. "People go in and out here like the prophet Jonah," he said to himself. "Do not the sharp points of the raised portcullis hang down in the round, dark hole exactly like a whale's teeth in its open jaws? I hope they will never snap on me." His heart did not grow lighter until he had left the fortress behind him. The towers of the city, over which Felix gazed at the fog-veiled plain, rose above the morning mist. On the market-place, opposite to the cathedral, he exchanged a few pleasant words with the host of the Stag, paid his reckoning, and after breakfast walked down the street to the covered wooden bridge leading across the Neckar to the other shore. At the end a second watch-tower was to be passed, and Felix was forced to tell the sentinel his name and the purpose of his stay in Heidelberg before the soldier would permit the stranger to go through the gate. The mountains of the Neckar valley lay before the joyous young pedestrian, whose eyes wandered in delight from the nut-trees bordering the stream to the green lowlands by the river, whose emerald waves flashed in a thousand glittering stars or burst in crests of white foam on the huge granite rocks, which legend relates a young giant, vying with his father, had hurled hither from Heiligenberg, while the latter flung his to the so-called Felsenmeer. On the left of the road blooming elder-bushes, in which birds built their nests, drooped over the garden-wall.

"Never, since I turned my back on Alpine snows,

have I seen a landscape that reminded me more of Italy than does this valley with its chestnut-trees and vines," said the young sculptor. "Who would have expected to find anything so beautiful on this side of the mountains as that superb palace yonder, this river-valley below. I'm one of Fortune's favorites, that's why my name is Felice." And drawing a long breath, he eagerly inhaled the pungent scent of the ploughed ground and the fragrance of the fields of sweet naphew borne to him on the breeze. While thus dreaming in the joyous consciousness of being the happiest of mortals he suddenly remembered, at a point where the road forked, that he did not know whether he was going the right way and he therefore stopped to be overtaken by an old peasant who had been standing by the sentinel at the bridge when he gave his name.

"You can't have heard much about Heidelberg," said the old man, "if you don't know where Neuberg is. Come with me, I suppose you want to see your brother, the Italian pastor?"

"How do you know that Magister Laurenzano is my brother?"

"Why, he looks like you in the face, only he is pale and thin; but he's a great preacher, you must see him in the pulpit, he's like a rope-dancer."

"Then you have heard him?" asked Felix, somewhat perplexed by the comparison.

"That I have," replied the peasant. "The first time I went to the Hofkirche I saw in the pulpit a young gentleman six feet tall, who shrieked and wailed and fought the air with his hands and flung himself from one side to the other, till I was really frightened. Why, what has happened, I thought to myself. 'Oh,

what deep corruption of the human heart,' I heard him shout as I sat down. Have they beaten him, thought I, or broken his windows, or robbed his vegetable garden? For it wasn't a bit like preaching, but everything so natural. Suddenly he said: 'Most beloved, such was the hardness of the Children of Israel's hearts against Moses.' Well, I thought, if it's nothing else, that happened a long time ago. I supposed the church-tower was on fire by the way the little fellow behaved."

Felix looked at the old man more closely. "You are no peasant?"

"I'm a miller."

"Is this house here the convent?"

"No, that's the Haarlass, where the novices' hair was cut off before they entered the convent. Now tan-balls are made there; it has become a tannery."

"You seem to be no friend of the Catholics?"

"I've been a Catholic myself, when everybody else was."

"And then you turned Lutheran?"

"And now I'm a Calvinist, since we are not allowed to remain faithful to Zwinglianism."

"Did you change willingly?"

"I was obliged to do so."

"And what will you do when the Count Palatine Louis becomes Elector?"

"We must take things as they come," replied the old man with a sly smile. "After Louis another Frederick will come. You know what the master has said, 'if Lutz won't do it, Fritz will.' We need only wait." Felix did not wholly trust the resignation of the weather-beaten old man; there was a crafty expression in his

eyes and his whole appearance by no means indicated dull submission.

"Among us at home," said the young artist, resuming the conversation, "there is a saying that in Germany a cockchafer can now fly over three established churches, but it seems to me, if it lives long, it need not fly at all. With you, religion changes like the weather."

"That gives stir and variety," replied the old man laughing. "When I used to live inside the city walls, each pastor taught a different dogma about the Lord's Supper, and every one of my eight children had a different parson. Heinz learned that the Lord's body was in the bread; that wasn't enough, said little Christine, it was in and under the bread. But Pastor Neuser told Christopher it was only there figuratively and was received in the act of eating, while Pastor Greiner taught Hansel: '*circa circum*' not in the bread, but round about it. Do you understand?"

"Were customs as varied as beliefs?" asked Felix evasively.

"Oh! yes. It was a lively year when the dead elector's counsellors had not yet gone and the new ones were already here; every church had its rites. Hess-husen put the host in the tabernacle, consecrated it by turning his back on the congregation, made them worship the wafer and gave it to the communicants over the communion cloth, so that no crumb should be lost, but the remnants buried as in the good old times. In the convent they had Mass again. In Peterskirche they wanted to be followers of Zwingli, like the elector's doctor Erastus. There they sat on benches and had the communion-cup and bread passed around, as if it were a tavern. In the sacristy the deacon always re-

clined at the communion with each twelve communicants, that the ceremonial might be exactly as it was at Jerusalem, and once he brought a tureen filled with wine, broke bread into it, and said they must dip their hands with Christ in the dish, that was a real Lord's Supper."

The Italian crossed himself.

"There must have been edifying religious peace when every preacher made his customs for himself."

"It wasn't exactly peaceful. In the Geistkirche Hesshusen once tried to snatch the communion-cup from Klebitz's hand at the altar, and these two reverend gentlemen abused each other in front of the church-door till the market-women of Ziegelhausen and Bergheim might have learned all sorts of new words. But the next Sunday the Superintendent General entered the pulpit, excommunicated the deacon, and forbade the parish to have anything to do with him. No one was allowed to eat or drink with the outcast, and the authorities turned him out of his office. Then you ought to have seen how the Heidelberg people fell upon each other."

"Now you see, man," said Felix angrily, "what happens when people cast aside customs that have prevailed for thousands of years and every one wants to follow whatever fancy enters his brain."

"The 'Turks' religion has lasted a thousand years, yet it comes from the devil."

"But what is your faith, if you're neither Catholic, Lutheran, follower of Zwingli, nor Calvinist?" asked Felix indignantly. The old man glanced cautiously around him, then, lowering his voice, replied: "The Spirit must do it, not the sacrament. Water won't do it, bread and wine won't do it. The Spirit must come

from within. They have a great many bibles in Heidelberg, but the people only look at them from without, they don't see the Spirit within. That's the cause of the confusion."

"So you belong to neither of the Heidelberg churches?"

"There is no truth among you," replied the old man. "You baptize children who do not yet know the difference between good and evil, or yea and nay, and then say they have renounced evil. So you begin with a lie."

"Why, they are confirmed when they reach maturity."

"A fine maturity. It enters into the very catechism when the boys monotonously recite in the cheeriest tones: 'If we live, we live unto the Lord, if we die, we die unto the Lord,' or shout: 'Oh, miserable man that I am! who will deliver me from the body of this death?' You ought to be ashamed of yourselves to teach children to prate of sacred things like Pagans, and turn them into mere buffoonery. Words to which a child attaches no meaning, are the beginning of lies. The dog learns from chewing greased straps, to eat leather. You confirm them when they are twelve or thirteen, not because the Spirit sanctions it, but because custom so dictates. It is not the introduction to the church, but the introduction to the ball-room. The pastor preaches, not because the Spirit moves him to it, but because he is paid for it. Like the buffoon, he repeats on Sunday what he has learned at home the day before. When, on my way home Saturday evening, I see the lighted windows of the studies at the parsonage, where the two parsons and the two deacons are learning their sermons, I can't help thinking — and they are

not even ashamed that they are lying. Nay, they no longer even know that it is a lie, when they stretch out their arms calling with rapturous gesticulations upon the Lord in Heaven and yet are merely repeating what they studied the day before, while down below sits the parson's wife who has heard him learn it all, yet isn't ashamed either. There are even some who preach in the convent-chapel and call upon the Lord so fervently that the poor girls' hearts fairly shrivel inside their tight-fitting bodices, and then they go to the Geistkirche in Heidelberg, and call upon Him again in the self-same words, that He may remember them better, for the Lord is very forgetful. Isn't that true?"

"But, man," cried Felix wrathfully, "how can you have a church without priests, how can you have a service on Sunday if no preacher prepares himself?"

"Come to us and I'll show you."

"Who are you?" asked Felix.

"If you come to Ziegelhausen, ask for the miller Werner from the Kreuzgrund; and you will be directed to me. You are a Roman Catholic?"

"I am."

"And so is your brother at heart?"

"Who says so?"

"When you meet him, tell him Werner the Baptist sends him word that, if he knew what a treacherous thing human speech is, he would not let his lips utter matters of which his heart is not full. But he won't be able to hold out much longer, for he is already beginning to feel that no one can deny the truth without injuring his own soul. If he wants to eat as well as he has done hitherto, let him stay where he is, but if he wants to sleep as well as of old, let him come to Werner, the

Baptist, who will get him the stone on which the Lord has written his name, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it."

The old man had drawn himself up to his full height and his eyes flashed. The peasant who had just uttered such strange jests had vanished, a prophet in a ticking-blouse stood before the young Italian. "Farewell," he added curtly.

"Thanks, father."

"No need. Here is your way. Don't go through the great gate, but along the wall; the door opening into the chaplain's room is in the round corner-tower. He's not allowed to lodge near the young ladies on the opposite side, and it would be better if he were still farther away. Fire and brimstone ought not to be brought so near together. Everything is as much upside down with you, as if Satan himself were your superintendent." With these words the old man walked rapidly away.

Felix watched him a long time. "Matters here seem even more upset than I expected," he said. "I left Venice gladly because the violence of the Holy Office vexed my very soul. I cannot yet forget the scene: the two poor men, exhausted by the tortures of the rack, who were brought down to the Lido and forced to get on a plank between two gondolas. Then the executioners rowed out with them to the Lagune, where one boatman steering to the right and the other to the left, the board fell, and the hapless wretches sank in the turbid waves. It was a horrible spectacle. Yet, to be sure, the condition of affairs existing here must be averted from my beautiful Italy, cost what it may. What have I not seen! The most sacred chapels profaned, priceless treasures of art destroyed by rude hands, the churches

bare as stables, altars and baptismal fonts shattered, organs broken. No mass by Palestrina, no Miserere speaks to these poor creatures, no picture by some pious master appeals to their dull hearts! Instead, their theologians quarrel and wrangle about how the incomprehensible mystery of Deity is to be understood, as if the mystery did not consist in the very fact that we cannot comprehend it. I can bear everything: false music, pictures that are botches, statues by Bandinelli, but when I hear the idle gossip of the heretics, I think a lazaretto ought to be built as large as the Tower of Babel, where they might all be locked up till they recovered from this loathsome disease." Absorbed in these reflections, the young man ascended the designated path and already saw the little door in the corner tower of the convent wall, when a medley of gay, girlish voices, blended in a confusion of merry, teasing outcries, roused him from his dreams.

CHAPTER V.

THE young sculptor was just in the act of turning to the door the miller had pointed out to him, when he suddenly found himself surrounded by a group of young girls who, shouting and laughing, ran out from behind the convent-wall. The excitement of their high spirits prevented them from noticing the stranger. The wildest had joined hands and were dancing in a ring around a wonderfully beautiful, fair-haired child, who was angrily trying to break through the circle. Her madcap school-

mates only danced more and more wildly around her, screaming: "caught, caught!"

"Let me go, or I'll tell the Lady Abbess," cried the prisoner, who was far nearer crying than laughing. But her saucy playfellows only sang in time: "Wegewarte,* Wegewarte, Marigold, Heliotrope." Their dresses fluttered in the wild whirl, their curls and braids floated in the breeze over their shoulders. The lovely child began to weep.

"Let Jungfrau Liebler alone," said Countess Erbach, "she can't help it, she is bewitched."

"The bewitched maiden," screamed Fraulein von Benningen.

"Stop, we'll make her a wreath of wegewarte," cried Fraulein von Eppingen. "The blue flowers will be becoming on her golden hair."

"Bewitched Maiden, lend me your tresses, I too should like to have such tender glances during lessons from a pair of well-known black eyes," exclaimed Bertha von Steinach.

Their cheeks glowed with saucy mirth as they again circled round the weeping girl, calling: "Wegewarte, Heliotrope." Meantime others had hastily plucked some blue flowers that grew by the way-side and, going behind the object of their teasing jests, fastened them on her clothes and in her fair hair. In doing so they pulled down her thick braids and she screamed with anger.

"Don't be so rough, Clara," cried one of the girls. Then they noticed the stranger, who was watching their game with mingled curiosity and indignation as he

* Wegewarte—waiting by the way—is the German name of a plant known in English by the prosaic name of chicory.

rapidly approached with the seeming intention of releasing the prisoner. The saucy schoolgirls instantly separated and darted back to the convent court-yard as if on a race. The prisoner also followed slowly, fastening her golden hair as she went. One of her wilful playmates slammed the door in her face and shouted merrily: "Go round outside through the gate-way, Wegewarte, no bewitched maiden passes here." Then they heard the girls run away amid peals of laughter. The angry beauty stamped her little foot and turned, but the tall, handsome stranger stood so close before her in the narrow path that she shrank timidly into a niche formed by the door.

"Now you are *my* prisoner, fair maid," said Felix smiling.

The girl's large blue eyes, on whose lashes tears were still clinging, measured the youth's tall figure a moment, then she raised her head an inch higher, and replied: "My schoolmates might make me a prisoner, but not you. Go your way and let me pass."

"Willingly, if you'll show me my way, fair maid. You know best where Meister Laurenzano lodges."

The angry blood crimsoned the young girl's cheeks, and shrugging her graceful shoulders with an air of natural hauteur she answered wrathfully.

"You are making contemptible use of what you overheard. You are no gentleman. Away from here!"

Felix was surprised at the effect of his words, and added: "Does it offend you to have me ask for this gentleman?"

The young girl abruptly turned her back on him and knocked at the door. Then it suddenly flashed upon Felix *whose* black eyes had been mentioned, and

a feeling of deep pity for the lovely child filled his heart. "They cannot hear," he said, "and nothing was farther from my thoughts than to jeer at you. I am Laurenzano the architect, and came here to see my brother, who is your chaplain. As your schoolmates have locked me out, too, I beg you to show me how I can get to him without violating the rules of the convent."

The words were so coldly courteous that the poor little thing now perceived that she had betrayed herself by interpreting the stranger's question as a scoff. A new dread, however, seized upon her. Suppose the newcomer should tell his brother what he had seen, and how ridiculously she had treated him! Again she stamped her foot indignantly, but this time the wrath was directed against herself. Her first impulse was to run away and hide. But the maiden triumphed over the child. She hastily collected her thoughts and resolved, instead, to treat the stranger with extreme dignity and thus remove the unfavorable impression she had made upon him.

"That will be impossible just now," she replied calmly. "The Magister is teaching the catechism to the little ones. But if you will wait here, I'll see that this door is unlocked and you can enter." She tried to take leave of the young man with a gracious wave of the hand, but as he still remained at her side, she continued in a tone of distant courtesy: "If you go through the main entrance, the portress must announce you and ask the Lady Abbess if she can admit a man. It is nonsense, but they act as if this was still a convent, though they don't behave in the least like nuns, as you have seen. Wait, it will be best for me to run through the gate and unlock this door from the inside, and thus save you the walk."

"Thanks, fair lady," replied Felix. "But allow me to go with you to the gate." The young girl hesitated. She was unwilling to enter the convent court-yard with the stranger, for this would afford her schoolmates fresh occasion for their raillery. "No, no," she replied, "I would rather show you a shady seat up here by the pond, then you can keep your eye on the door." One thing was clearly settled in her pretty little head, she must explain the scene her unwelcome listener had just witnessed, that she might not be questioned about it by her beloved teacher or the Lady Abbess. She moved gracefully along the convent-wall in front of the young man, whose artist eyes watched the pliant, rounded figure, firm, elastic step, and easy carriage. Seeing one of the plucked blossoms lying on the path, she angrily set her little foot upon it.

"What harm has poor Clytia done, that you trample on her?" asked Felix innocently.

"You saw it all," she replied, "you saw how the young girls of noble birth jeered at me! It is very uncomfortable for me here, because I am the only plebeian; my father is the Councillor Erastus — or Liebler the old name by which the young ladies like to call him."

"Ah, my noble patron," cried Felix.

"You know my father? Oh, how glad I am! Is he not a splendid man?" exclaimed the pretty child, her blue eyes sparkling joyously and her cheeks flushing with a glow of happiness.

"A noble man," said Felix.

"The elector sent me here with Countess Erbach, Fraulein von Gemmingen, Fraulein von Venningen, and several others, that we might learn the languages, history, and the catechism, and become accustomed to

strict discipline and whatever else our royal master imagines may be acquired here. As I am the only plebeian, they treat me as an intruder and Fraulein von Lützelstein is the worst of all. She declared that when Magister Laurenzano gave us our Italian lesson I was constantly turning my head towards him like a sunflower, so they called me 'Heliotrope, Turnsole.' You heard them. But it's all nonsense."

"I heard them shout 'Wegewarte,'" said Felix mischievously.

The young girl flushed angrily. "That is the same flower," she said, casting an embarrassed glance at the tree-tops. "It will be best for me to tell you the whole story, that you may say nothing foolish to the Magister about it. I had gone out into the convent meadow to gather flowers, merely because I wanted to have nothing more to do with the young ladies. Out of sheer malice, they followed me and Fraulein von Eppingen declared I had gone there to be in the Magister's way, and then they screamed 'Wegewarte' and made me a prisoner. But," she continued raising her large, innocent eyes, in which the tears were already springing, "surely you won't tell the Magister, or I shall drown myself. Rather than be so humiliated, I would jump into the Neckar. You will not tell him, sir, will you?"

Felix smiled and held out his hand: "I promise."

The young girl, evidently relieved, hastily extended hers and he was in no hurry to release the soft little fingers till, with a slight blush, she withdrew them. The lovely fair-haired child stood before him like a beautiful woodland nymph. The quiet pool, the dark trees behind her lent the outlines of the graceful figure a doubly

charming relief. Fairly intoxicated with her beauty, Felix entirely forgot the object for which he had come, and thought only of finding some pretext for detaining the lovely creature. One of the hated flowers her play-mates had fastened in her hair, her belt, and among the folds of her dress, was still clinging to its hem. He pulled it off, saying: "Why have you given this beautiful blue blossom we call Clytia, the ugly names of Wegewarte and Bewitched Maiden?"

"Why," she replied, with childish surprise, "surely you know that this blue thing opens its calix at the first rays of the sun and constantly turns its head to follow its course until evening, when its petals close again. So legend says that the blue flower is an enchanted princess who would fain make herself known to her lover, the sun-god, and therefore gazes yearningly at him. Haven't you heard Hans Vintler's song:

' Full many say this flow'ret blue
The Wegewarte, maid so true
Waits, yearning for her lover.' "

Then the pretty child suddenly blushed crimson and with downcast eyes continued: "It is said, too, that the flower brings good-luck, if found before sunrise, but it must be instantly tied to a staff or it will vanish."

"That is certainly a naughty maiden," replied Felix jestingly. "May I now tell you in return what we know in Italy about this bewitched Clytia?"

"I shall be very glad to hear, only you must never let any one know that you call the flower Clytia, for as my name is Lydia, they would tease me by calling me by this name too."

"But surely *I* may call you Clytia?" The young girl shook her pretty little head.

"Begin your story or I must go." She leaned against the nearest tree and gazed thoughtfully at the smooth surface of the pond.

Felix began: "The Pagan writer, Ovid, says that in the old, old days, when everybody was as handsome and happy as only certain fair-haired children of good-luck are now, there lived two maidens, Leucothoe and Clytia. Both loved Apollo, the handsome god of the sun; but he preferred Leucothoe and soon his heart so glowed with love for the fair maid that it burned more fiercely than the rays of his sun-chariot, so that he scorched the earth and the stars. The handsome god became more and more absorbed in dreams, and the whole course of nature was disturbed. He rose too early in the morning, like the children on Christmas, in eager haste to see his beautiful doll, and went to rest too late at night because he could not tear himself away from her presence. No one knew anything about the seasons of the year, because the god remained in the sky as long in winter as he did in summer, for Leucothoe at all times seemed to him equally charming. In the course of time his love made him melancholy. Frequently he stopped shining in broad noonday, or he was pale and faint and hid himself behind the clouds. When one day, from some love-sick whim, he set before noon, the Father of the Gods declared that this state of things could last no longer. He would give him leave of absence in the evening, and a latch-key to Olympus in case he came home late, but he must commence his duties punctually in the morning and attend to them regularly throughout

the day or he would make the brave and reliable Hercules the sun-god. Handsome Apollo thought Hercules at best only fit to be a house-servant, but he was glad at heart that Jupiter had arranged matters in this way. So in the evening, when he reached the distant West where the world ends, he unharnessed his horses and turned them out to graze in a splendid large meadow where Hesperus, the evening star, who remains in the sky all night, was obliged to watch them. He bathed himself in the ocean and then darted with the swiftness of a god to the cape of Circe, where Leucothoe lived, and instantly assumed the form of the girl's mother. 'Go,' he said to the maid-servants, 'I want to speak to my daughter.' As soon as he was alone with Leucothoe the disguise vanished and he fell at her feet in his eternal, god-like beauty. The poor girl was startled, but she could not resist, for he was a god and she only a poor, mortal maiden. So he often visited her, the usual course of nature was restored and everybody was satisfied except the languishing Clytia. As the happy god no longer looked at her, and her sighs died unheeded in the air, Clytia grew sick and sorrowful, her heart gave her no rest. She would no longer go out during the day, for she did not want to see the god who so basely scorned her; but at night she wandered through woods and fields, bewailing her sorrows to the chaste Luna, who looked cold and coy and would not listen to such griefs. Once she chanced to pass Leucothoe's house and saw a bright light shining through all the chinks. Stealing curiously up, she listened at a crevice. Oh! how her heart ached and cried out in bitter anguish, for she saw the sun-god sitting beside Leucothoe, clasping her hands and telling her the most

beautiful stories, while the maiden, wholly absorbed in her happiness, gazed at his god-like countenance and radiant eyes. Clytia was seized with fury, for she thought it was solely her companion's fault that the sun-god had never heeded her or her love. 'Watch what your daughter is doing,' she shrieked into the ears of Leucothoe's father. 'She is sitting in her room with a man, a stranger.' Just as the god, summoned by Hesperus, hurried away, the stern father entered Leucothoe's room; the daughter, convicted of her fault, pleaded in vain for mercy. When Apollo returned, he saw before his loved one's house a new-made grave over which the men-servants were just smoothing the earth. Within it lay the beautiful girl, whom they had buried alive. The cruel father thought his honor would thus be saved and the disdained Clytia believed the god would now turn to her. But men seek maids who avoid them, and despise those who are too easily won. Clytia had now become absolutely intolerable to Apollo. His eyes rested on the scene of his former happiness, and as he thus in his passionate grief shone more and more warmly on poor Leucothoe's grave a strange plant shot from the dead girl's heart and pierced the earth with its tiny leaves. It was the Juniper, which in the sunshine perfumed the air with its wonderful fragrance and exhaled its soul in the rays of the god. Thus in death the fair maiden gave delight to every sense and health to all who inhaled her breath. But Clytia, whom the god punished by a single fiery glance, sank to the earth, her form shrivelled, and she became a way-side plant, trampled under foot by every passer-by. But the strongest and best part of her nature, her love for the sun-god, put forth a blossom shaped exactly like the

sun and, when the god rises, she turns her flower-face longingly towards him, follows his course throughout the day until at night the weary little head droops feebly on her breast. This is the story of poor Clytia."

When Felix began his tale he had not considered what an offence to his hearer was contained in its moral; he had only desired to detain the beautiful girl by his talk. But after commencing he let the matter take its course. He was forced to go through with it and therefore preferred to make a virtue of necessity. He adopted a more and more paternal tone and only when he saw that the pretty child was bowing her fair little head like Clytia herself and shrinking like a rudely-handled flower did he bring the legend to a hasty conclusion. But Lydia had suddenly straightened her drooping figure, her ear caught the sound of a step approaching behind the trees, her face turned towards a tall form advancing with dignified bearing along the path and a tell-tale blush crimsoned her cheeks. Just at that moment Felix recognized his brother. "Paolo!" he shouted. The black-robed young teacher cordially stretched out both hands to his long-expected relative, but Felix noticed that his burning eyes were seeking the beautiful girl beyond him. Meantime the latter had regained her self-command and, passing the brothers with a simple, decorous curtsy, walked towards the convent. When Felix glanced back after the fair fugitive, he saw that she, too, had looked round, and being detected in the act, she instantly ran off, vanishing behind the bushes. Her dismay did not escape the artist's practised eye, and he shook his head as he began to talk with his brother.

Paolo, who hated the crowded highway, chose a path above it leading through the vineyards which after

affording a view of the blue-veiled lowlands of the Rhine, again descended towards the Haarlass. Slowly the two brothers, both tall, aristocratic looking young men, ascended the path. The artist was clad in a tight-fitting costume then fashionable in Italy, with the becoming Raphael cap; the Magister wore a low hat, whose brim was fastened up on both sides by a cord, and the long, flowing robe of his office; his delicate, sharply-cut features being framed by a plate-like white ruff.

"The head of John the Baptist on a charger," involuntarily thought Felix, who perceived, however, that Paul's keen, intellectual face was most becomingly relieved by the white nimbus. "You wear the saints' halo round your neck," he said.

But Paolo did not smile. His remarks were laconic and hesitating. His brother could not ascertain whether he had become a professed monk in Venice, and was left equally in the dark as to whether he had acknowledged the creed of Calvin by any public act. To the question whether he still held to the old faith, he answered: "That's as people take it!" Only one thing was clear—he was not happy. The ruddy color had vanished from his face, which had grown thin and haggard, his dull eyes were sometimes restlessly averted, sometimes fixed with a piercing, suspicious gaze on his companion's face. At last the two brothers, who after so long a separation had so little to say to each other, walked on silently in no pleasant mood. Wherever the blue Wegewarte raised its little head from the turf Paolo plucked it. So Felix perceived that the nickname of Erastus's little daughter had already been repeated to her teacher, and also detected the state of the latter's heart.

"You have a fancy for the blue Clytia," he said kindly.

"Botanists call it *chicorium*; it is used as a remedy in fevers."

"In the fever of love too?"

"What do you mean by that?"

"Why, I heard that it clings to the sight of the sun as certain pupils hang upon their teacher's lips."

Paolo angrily flung the flowers among the vines as if they had suddenly been turned to nettles. "Cease these jests," he answered wrathfully; "you know I am not fond of trifling."

An uncomfortable pause followed these irritable words, and to give the conversation a different turn Felix asked whether what Werner had told him about the former use of the Haarlass was correct.

"Nonsense!" replied Paul. "Every child knows that the novices' hair is cut off at the altar of the convent chapel, not on the borders of the convent estates. Haarlass means *hari lot*, that is master's lot — the property of the lord of the estate; the rest is only a sorry joke."

Felix cheerily repeated the remainder of his conversation with the Baptist.

"Means will be taken to silence this insolent heretic," was Paul's sole reply.

"When shall we see each other again?" he then added coldly, as they reached the road below.

"Are you going back now?"

"I have still something to do. If you can, come to the Stag this evening. The preachers from the neighborhood meet at the round tables in the back-room and I am in the habit of going, too, to become acquainted

with the estimable clergy of this country. We can talk over the rest there." As he spoke, he held out his small thin hand to his brother, who gazed earnestly into his eyes. But Paolo evaded the loving glance and turned back towards Neuberg.

"Is his heart really withered," thought Felix, "or is he secretly unhappy?"

CHAPTER VI.

DEEPLY wounded in his fraternal feelings and bitterly disappointed in the pleasant anticipations with which he had looked forward to this meeting, the artist walked rapidly away. But the Magister gazed after his brother with a gloomy, sorrowful look, then sat down on one of the stones by the road-side and stared thoughtfully at the dark waves of the river, which reflected the black pine-trees of the Königstuhl. The smooth flow of the stream recalled the muddy waters of the canal on which for so many years he had looked down from the windows of the college in Venice, and he remembered that sad morning when he found himself conveyed from the little palace in the ever-green garden of the Chiaia and the blooming orange groves of Naples to the dank, gloomy corridors of the Jesuit college at Venice. Instead of the view of the Bay, gleaming with all the hues of the opal and emerald, he saw with loathing the brown mire of the lagoon. His eye, accustomed to wander from the jagged ridges of Capri to the noble outlines of Mt. Vesuvius, now beheld, beyond the muddy ditch, a bare, blank wall, down which drops of

water were trickling. Accustomed during his hours of leisure to play in the garden with his little sister under his mother's loving eyes, he was now sent "at recreation" to a long, dark corridor with fifty boys, who looked as pale and ill at ease as he, or obliged in the evening walk to the Lido to move demurely along at the end of the long line of pupils under the direction of a teacher, without turning his eyes to the right or left to gaze at the beauty of the stately city.

At first he had thought that he must surely die in this world bereft of light and maternal love. He had wept all night and spent his days in vain longing for home. His sole occupation was praying in secret, for he had been told it was in his power to save the souls of his mother and his little sister from the flames of purgatory, and when he sorrowfully submitted to his imprisonment it was principally because every day he spent in the monastery counted ten days indulgence he could give to them. Then, during the hours of instruction, he perceived that he understood the teacher more quickly than the others and could give better and clearer answers. The teachers themselves repeated at every recitation that Paolo Laurenzano was the best pupil, and this for the first time reconciled him a little to his new life. The little triumph of ambition had fallen into the child's heart like the grain of mustard-seed mentioned in Holy Writ and the tiny germ grew into a huge tree, where all the passions built their nests. Torn from all that had been dear to his childish heart, he knew no other happiness than study and his teachers' praise. His sole effort, his sole thought was the morrow's task. While the other scholars were playing at bowls in the college court-yard or at St. Ignatius' favorite

game of billiards, or at dominos for Pater Nosters and Ave Marias, which the loser had to recite for the winner, he was devoted to his books and exercises. Only one impulse animated him — to surpass the others, to be the foremost of the good scholars. Whoever disputed this place was his foe, and he stole the hours from his sleep, from play, even under the inspection of the teachers, to attain this goal. A son of Naples, he had a natural gift of rhetoric, but the instruction of the Jesuit school was principally directed to the cultivation of oratory and debate. Everything that glittered and allured the eye was fostered — Latin declamation and argument, poetry and the drama of the schools, sophistical philosophy and bombastic rhetoric, in short all the empty parade that awes the foolish. Paolo's talents were specially in the domain of rhetoric and when at the public exhibitions, which were frequently given in the interest of the college, he hurled his Latin upon a weaker opponent with the rattling volubility of a Neapolitan tongue, when in his soft, musical voice he declaimed long passages from Virgil or Lucan, when from the lofty pulpit of the aula he delivered pompous school-boy speeches in echoing periods to the aristocratic audience, which, with the vivacity of an Italian assembly, applauded every pointed antithesis, shouted approval at every epigrammatic close of a sentence, and enthusiastically hailed each bit of boyish nonsense, Paolo scarcely seemed to himself an ordinary mortal, and the dignified step with which, when his speech was concluded, he left the tribune might have served as a model to the triumvirs of Rome.

Thus the education of the Jesuit Fathers had poured into the blood of the gifted boy the venom of

ambition, which raged within like a burning fire, no longer allowing him an hour's repose. There was always something to be learned, something to be accomplished which no one else could do, and only while restlessly toiling at the task of daily widening the distance between his own powers and those of others, so that no one could be even distantly compared with him, was he happy.

To train ambitious spirits who were anxious to surpass the dull mediocrity of the graduates of other schools, was one of the principal aims of the Order and the purpose of this education was brilliantly attained in Paul, who might have been called a pattern pupil of the Institution.

If the self-emulation of the talented youth was thus fostered in one direction to a mad desire for distinction, so on the other hand was his moral nature slavishly subjugated. The Fathers of the Society had based the tuition of their pupils upon the psychologically correct idea that nothing brings men into such absolute dependence as self-consciousness: the Superiors know your whole past, all your errors, your secret longings and sins, you are absolutely transparent to them. The first thing that had been required of Paul, as likewise of every other pupil on being admitted into the college, was a general confession in which he had been obliged to mention not only his faults but his yearnings as well. He had described with childlike sincerity all his failings and his fervid southern imagination, joined with the mental excitement under which he had labored since the death of his little sister and his beloved mother, caused the melancholy boy to picture himself as a little monster. The rector praised his sincerity and se-

verity to himself and appointed one of the teachers in the institution to be his confessor. He then learned from his fellow-pupils that the secrecy of the confessional, elsewhere so strictly regarded, was not held inviolate at the college, and that the confessor founded his reports to the rector upon the confessions made by the scholars. Henceforward, however, he was admonished to make daily reports of his acts, thoughts, and moods, strict watch being exercised to prevent any deception or concealment on the part of a pupil. A special spy was assigned to each individual, who was forced to submit to be constantly watched, reproved or denounced by him. This system was the more destructive to the relations existing between the boys themselves because the accused scholar was allowed to go unpunished if he could convict his accuser of the same crime, while in the other case chastisement was bestowed by a stalwart fellow-pupil, the "Brother Corrector." Under such constant espionage, which he was in turn compelled to exercise on others, Paul Laurenzano had grown up. He was never permitted to carry on a conversation without at the same time listening to what his neighbor was saying, and on no account was he suffered to keep to himself what he chanced to learn in any way. The Superiors thus obtained a degree of information concerning their pupils which left nothing to be desired. While receiving with one ear the confessions and self-accusations of the scholar, with the other the tales and reports of his fellow-pupils, each character lay before them, as it were, bare to the roots. This system rendered it easier to govern as well as employ each individual, since they could estimate with tolerable accuracy what might be expected from him.

But in time the pupils, to use Ignatius' own expression, learned "the difficult art of guarding the doors of the senses," for only by becoming as opaque as possible to teachers and fellow-pupils could they save a remnant of liberty, independent judgment, or private conscience, a little of the individuality every deeper nature craves.

Paul had left home a frank, chivalrous lad, but his good impulses gradually withered in the fire of ambition fanned by his teachers. In the constant strife with his companions for the first place he found foes who were dangerous, and it was natural that the ambitious boy should judge them more sharply and paint them in his reports in darker hues than others who recognized his superiority without envy, and whose mediocrity proved a desirable foil. When, in his gloomy, ascetic mood he pitilessly revealed his own errors, his rivals were not to be allowed to make themselves out better than they were. Zealously watching, listening, spying, he denounced them and when, by successful informing, he had again brought a competitor to the "bench of disgrace," or the "dunce's stool," he felt a thrill of malicious satisfaction. He was therefore anything but popular among his school-mates and the nickname "the Informer" which they bestowed upon him, well expressed the mingled respect and aversion with which he was regarded in the college. Some time elapsed ere the young zealot became aware that with each of the romantic confessions he had made concerning the depths of wickedness in his own soul, he had forged so many chains that bound him to the Society of Jesus. For the rector based his reports to the Provincial of the Order upon these confessions, reports which, constantly augmenting, followed the pupil through life. Wherever the affiliated person turned,

whether he settled in the Old World or the New, he could never escape his Past. Everywhere the eye of the Order was fixed upon him, everywhere his former confessions in which the dark spots of his life were pointed out accompanied him, everywhere an account was kept of his acts. If any one entangled in these snares had ever felt an inclination to break loose, he knew only too well that the Order at any time had the power to crush him morally. But in those days Paul felt no such impulses. He had been imbued with a special pride in the Order and was aware that in league with the Society which had already spread over the Old and New World, he was summoned to the most brilliant career. After the training he had received he felt perfectly conscious of his superiority to the rest of the world and all artless, simple-minded people.

Accustomed for years to watch those who surrounded him and be watched by them in return, he had acquired a degree of self-control that like an impenetrable iron mask protected him against every attack. It had long become a second nature to utter no word that could injure himself or overlook one that exposed the weak points of another. He knew no kindly emotions and interests. All the family-feeling, love of home, brotherly affection, brought with him from his father's house, had been consumed in the torrid atmosphere of ambition. God creates the heart of man honest, but it learns many wiles in the school of ambition. Paolo had entered the college a fresh, imaginative, good, and wonderfully handsome lad, he left it a pale, ambitious, over-excited, thoroughly-trained champion of the Church. He was in his twentieth year when the rector of the college pronounced his education completed and

the school awarded him all the prizes it had to bestow. True, the pupil who graduated so brilliantly knew nothing of the secret satisfaction usually associated with the attainment of this goal. His occupation had hitherto been to be *primus omnium*, and he would have preferred to remain so all his life. He possessed no family who desired to make his gifts useful for this or that interest. The admonitions of St. Ignatius to speak of relatives only as belonging to the past, and the lesson of the Order that love for one's own flesh and blood was one of the strongest chains with which Satan bound us to earth, met little opposition from the orphaned boy. Homeless as he was, he consented to become a novice and was assigned to the ranks of the "Indifferents," who were still free to choose whether they would find occupation in the world or the Church. The study of philosophy and theology in the college was continued, interrupted by periods of service in the hospitals of Venice, by pilgrimages made by all the pupils to neighboring shrines and by begging expeditions through the city, to which Paul devoted himself with all the self-abnegation inspired by his ambition and contempt for mankind. Sometimes standing in a sick-room holding the crucifix before the dim eyes of the dying; at others patiently repeating texts and prayers to stammering children, teaching the catechism in the city churches, going from house to house asking alms, or lying stretched in his cell, fasting, praying, and scourging himself. At the end of the first year's probation his exemplary zeal caused the rector to inform him that he might now take charge of a sphere of labor outside the college, which the General who had just arrived from Rome was to assign to the de-

parting pupils that very day. Directly after these tidings were announced to him, Paul was conducted to the oratory of the monastery where he found all the inmates of the institution assembled. The pupils sat in crowded ranks before the same pulpit where Paul had so often uttered the wisdom of sages with his boyish lips. Venetian maids and matrons crowded the benches allotted to the public, and along the walls stood citizens, nobles, and even many of the highest officials in city. Below the tribune numerous aristocratic patrons of the college were paying their respects to the Roman General, who, robed in the scarlet of a Cardinal, accepted their courtesies with repellent dignity. To-day also a pupil entered the pulpit, to welcome the General in a well-composed Latin ode as the distinguished guest of the college and to praise his virtues. According to the programme one speech was to follow another, but such formalities seemed little to the taste of the sullen visitor. Imperiously waving his hand, he ascended the rostrum himself. The stately Prince of the Church, a tall, ascetic figure, with stern features and glowing eyes, commenced in a harsh but resonant voice a powerful sermon upon the text: "The harvest truly is plenteous, but the laborers are few." He drew a picture of the problems before the Church in the countries of believers and heretics, in the Old and the New World, among Turks and idolaters, and described the need of the copper-colored heathen, who to-day, like the Macedonian who appeared before the apostle in Troas, were calling to the pupils of this institution: "Come, help us." Passing on to details, he then explained that the mission in Malabar, through an insurrection of the populace had lost half the mis-

sionaries recently sent out. The same martyr's crown and eternal life awaited those summoned to fill this gap. Then calling ten young men by name, he asked : " Will you go to this heathen coast and preach Christ crucified,—to teach the faith and die for it ?"

The ten youths rose and answered in one breath : " We will, General."

A thrill of lofty emotion ran through all who witnessed the scene and there was not a dry eye among the women.

The old man continued : " The yellow fever has swept away two-thirds of the inmates of our monastery at Vera Cruz. The college is empty. The pestilence has now ceased, but will return in summer with twofold fury. The rector proposes the following novices to fill the void," and again the stern old man read several names in his harsh voice. " Will you go there to preach the Word and die, if it is God's will ?"

The youths had risen and they also said : " We will, General."

" Even worse than the heathen and the pestilence," continued the old Cardinal, " is the heresy raging among the savage-natured Germans on the other side of the Alps. Those whom we send there must be armed with all the weapons of the Spirit, must perhaps even lay aside for a time the garb of St. Ignatius, for each will encounter some special danger." A succession of names was then called for this department of labor, among them that of Paul Laurenzano. These youths also, in reply to the question whether they were ready, answered unanimously : " We are, General."

" You have vowed, my beloved sons," the Cardinal continued, " to die for the sacred cause of the Church.

But this is not the hardest, nay it is the lightest portion of your task. Far more difficult is the duty of living for her, imposed upon you from this moment. To live as if you did not live. You know the vow in which the novitiate has already tried you. Instead of poverty, many of you will now enter upon a life in palaces and wealthy abbeys and perhaps you will be commanded to share this luxury for a time. Amid this apparent wealth you will keep your vow of poverty if, as the apostle says, you enjoy as if you did not enjoy; if, to use a comparison of our Father Ignatius, you are like a statue that allows itself to be robed and unrobed, covered with rags or jewels, without either knowing or heeding it, requiring nothing, feeling a wish for nothing. Then, while feasting at loaded tables, clad in silk and purple, you will still keep your vow of poverty. Others, on the contrary, in the wigwams of the Indians or the basket-houses of the Mongolians will scarcely have the wherewithal to cover their nakedness and appease their hunger. There will be times when the stone by the road-side will be their pillow, a handful of moss their food. But if in this scarcity they should fix their minds upon making their poverty as comfortable as possible, if, instead of thinking night and day of their duty, their hearts should cleave to the little that is left them, they would break their vow of poverty, no matter how poor they might be. To free their souls from any sense of pleasure in possession is what their vow demands.

“Secondly our illustrious founder desired that his followers should be conspicuous by their observance of the vow of obedience. But this does not apply simply to external things, to your implicit execution of what is commanded. The dog renders the same obedience to

its master, there would be nothing meritorious in that. To have obedience develop into a virtue the subordinate must make his Superior's will his own, sacrifice his own opinions and wishes, that he may not only have the same will but the same thoughts as his Superior, and must believe everything the latter thinks and commands to be right and true. All your valor depends upon the simplicity of blind obedience. 'Imperfect obedience,' says Saint Ignatius, 'has two eyes, but to its own injury; perfect obedience is blind, but in that very fact consists its wisdom and perfection.' You must be filled with a blind impulse of obedience, as Abraham was eager to slay his own son because to obey seemed a joy to him. That was the obedience that made him just—that he even did what seemed to him evil, after God had commanded it; for goodness is not good in itself, but only because God has ordained it in his law. Abraham knew that this law does not bind God, and desired to have no reason, no will, no love, no conscience of his own—where God had spoken, only obedience, and therein consisted his righteousness. So, whoever wishes to oppose his own little mental light to the light of the Order is a fool who seeks to look at the sun with a lamp, and whoever is troubled by scruples of conscience at the commands of his Superior may remember that it is one of the great privileges of our Society that the members who have scrupulous natures can, according to papal assurance, rest satisfied under all circumstances with the decision of their Superiors. But the highest stage of obedience, towards which we must all strive, is to have such scruples no longer arise, to acquire a perfect conformity between our own reason and our Superior's so that we are of the same opinion, have the same will,

believe everything he commands to be sensible, and take his judgment for our rule of conduct. If you do not by your obedience subjugate your reason as well as your will, your obedience will be no perfect burnt offering, because you have not sacrificed to God the noblest part, that is, your reason; an offering in which you keep the best portion for yourself is not acceptable to Him."

This was the benediction with which Paul, after a hurried farewell, left the college to set out in the company of a stately older member of the Order, whom they called Doctor Antonio, to cross the Alps on his way to the diocese of the Bishop of Speyer. Everything had seemed like a dream, and the sudden dismissal inspired a feeling akin to terror. The young monk passed with closed eyes through the most splendid cities of Italy and the laughing plains of Verona. In vain the peach-tree stretched its rosy boughs of blossoms towards him, in vain the golden lemons gleamed from the espaliers. His eyes were fixed upon his own heart and the tasks that awaited him. The sense of incompetency and dread of the future stole for the first time into the young soul of the learned boy. To cheer him his companion, a vivacious gentleman with crafty, mobile features enumerated all the privileges Paul, as a member of the Society of Jesus, would now share. He could bestow absolution in all cases, even exercising the prerogative of the bishop; he could release from excommunication wreckers, convicts, and heretics, and could grant dispensation from all vows that did not concern a pilgrimage to Rome. He could even relieve men from obligations assumed with a solemn oath, if they were contrary to the advantage of the Church. If he rose

to higher degrees in the Order, he could remit all ecclesiastical penalties, even those for a relapse into schism and heresy, nay even for the forgery of apostolic letters; in case of insufficient repentance he could bestow the full benefit of complete penitence and change mortal sins to venial ones, to say nothing of the solemn mysteries of the sacraments. All this he might do or would speedily be able and permitted to do, yet instead of being proud and carrying his young head several inches higher, he moved wearily and sadly by the side of his eloquent companion, who secretly wondered why the priests in Venice had made such an ado about this melancholy dreamer. Reading their prayer-books or walking one behind the other, occasionally exchanging a monosyllable, Loyola's two pupils ascended the lofty heights whose base was washed by the green waves of the Lago di Garda. In the evening at the tavern in Arco it was discovered that Brother Paul had not even noticed that their road during the day had been over water, rocks, and snow. His companion shook his head and thought, "he will probably be a Doctor Ecstasticus." So the next day he changed his tone and while passing through the desolate valley of the Sarco towards Trent, Pater Antonius began to praise the special protection the Holy Virgin had bestowed on the Society of Jesus from the very beginning. St. Ignatius in his last illness had beheld the Madonna covering all his sons with her cloak. She had again revealed herself in a vision recently to a Brother in Calabria, who was so enraptured with her unspeakable beauty that he was seen hovering in the air as he stretched his arms towards her. Nay, in the college at Rome a saintly penitent lived in his cell without food, for

night after night the Holy Virgin appeared to nourish him as if he were an infant. The eloquent priest related countless miracles wrought by fragments of her veil or her fair hair which Saint Mark had brought to Venice. Mary must also be made the real object of worship by the Order, for like the Pope she wore a triple diadem. She was the Daughter of the Father, the Mother of the Son, and the Bride of the Holy Ghost. Without her God could not have created the world, for had she repelled the Angel Gabriel, the Son could not have become Man, men could not have been saved, and God could not have created the world except for eternal torment, which His love would have forbidden. That is why the whole universe worshipped Mary, the stars were only the great rosary which absolved the angels, and the Milky Way was its tassels. Amid rocky deserts natural temples of the Virgin were found, which even the wild beasts respected, and recently an image of the Madonna had been discovered in a cave of stalactites in Rhaetia by a young shepherd who followed one of his lambs which daily disappeared in the cave just at the hour of vespers. To his amazement, the youth saw the animal kneel and bleat before Mary's altar as if to salute it. The water collected in this cave of stalactites was a remedy for fever and gout, erysipelas and lunacy. Nay, it even cured souls, for a rude sinner who had neglected his Easter duties ten years, drank the water without knowing it, and the sacred potion instantly taking effect he went at once to confession.

Doctor Antonio had talked himself almost out of breath in praise of Mary, for the path led upward in a steep ascent. As he now paused and asked the silent novice what he thought of all these miracles of the king-

dom of grace, the latter answered by quoting a verse from Tibullus, addressed to Isis. "That thou canst do so, all the tablets which hang in thy temple prove." Brother Antonio then perceived that the reserved youth was no visionary, and from Trent they pursued their journey very silently along the shadeless valley of the Adda up to Bolseno, from whence Brother Antonio went down to the snow-covered Brenner pass. On the other side of the Alps, beyond Innsbruck, the companions fell into an eager dispute. They had remained several days in the city, where Brother Antonio had business. His money, he said, was exhausted, and Paul to his amazement was roused at early dawn by his comrade and urged to set out as they would be obliged to defraud the tavern-keeper of his bill. The novice made no objection, but when his Superior had shut the door he laid upon the table one of the gold florins which had been given him in Venice to supply his wants, that the host might suffer no loss. Pater Antonius had probably suspected something of the kind, for he returned to the room to fetch some forgotten article and when they were out on the high-road, quietly unfastened his handkerchief and added Paul's gold coin to his last half-pence. The youth indignantly demanded that they should return and pay the tavern-keeper his due. Antonio's sole answer was the question: "Is it better that our sacred mission should be delayed and perhaps hundreds of souls go to hell, or that this inn-keeper should lose a florin? Let us choose the lesser evil by defrauding a rogue, and it is extremely probable that we shall thereby be all the more acceptable to God."

"But suppose he follows us and accuses us to

the magistrate of the nearest village?" replied Paul, angrily.

"Then we will swear that you put a gold piece on the table to satisfy him."

"But how will you deny that you pocketed it again?"

"If I do, I shall mentally add the words, 'in my purse,' for you see I am wrapping it in my handkerchief."

"But these Dominican tricks are known, and you will be called upon to take your oath without any mental reservation."

"Even in this case one can swear '*without any unlawful reservation*,' for mine would be lawful, since it is done for God's cause."

"And do you expect to be able to convert the heretics to God by such rascally tricks?" said Paul wrathfully.

"No, my son, I am not so foolish; we will convert the Germans by lighting a fire in their country which will make the angels draw up their feet and melt the stars in the sky."

"You have a strange way of providing for the happiness of Germany."

The older man laughed. "Do you suppose I climbed over these rocks to make the Teutons and Cimbrians happy? I want to restore the Roman rule, bequeathed by the Emperor Constantine to the Pope, so that when Christ comes in the guise of Caesar, as Michael Angelo painted him in his Last Judgment, or as Imperator mounted on a white steed, as the revelation of San Giovanni describes him, we need not appear before him and say: '*Salve semper Auguste*, but

we have lost the two Germans.' If you are bent upon making people happy, you should go to the Waldenses."

Paul kept silence. He could not possibly believe this man in earnest, but it cut him to the soul to know that such a fantastic enthusiast wore the garb of his Order. As they sat at breakfast in the next village, a loud noise suddenly arose outside the tavern door, and the two pilgrims heard the voice of the Innsbruck inn-keeper enquiring for them.

"Give me your purse," said Brother Antonio coolly, "that I may satisfy him."

Paul angrily flung it to him and Brother Antonio disappeared. A short time after the chief magistrate of the place came in with the tavern-keeper and questioned the young novice, who then discovered that his companion had run away and robbed him also of his money. Quietly untying a corner of his cloak, he took out one of the last coins from his little store of savings and paid the bill, thus escaping without imprisonment or corporal chastisement. His inclination to overtake his runaway companion was naturally slight. Instead of going northward through Munich as the latter had intended, he turned to the west and walked through the Tyrol to the Rhine, where he reached the college at Speyer before the appointed time. The rector listened coldly to his report.

"You have stood your test badly, Brother Paul, and doubly violated the rules of the Order," he said. "You know that the members of our Society are always commanded to travel in pairs as the Lord sent out His disciples two by two. Therefore you have broken the vow of obedience. You still believe that you are permitted to set your conscience, your opinion,

your will, above those of your Superior. But it was not without reason that the late Father Ignatius said: 'Even if God had placed a senseless beast over you, you should not refuse to obey it as your guide and teacher; because God so ordered,' and he also wrote, 'if the Roman Church declares that anything which seems to you black is white, you must not believe your eyes, but the Church.' Instead of doing this, you have placed your own intelligence, after the manner of the heretics, above the revealed law. We now know what to think of you."

So Paul had to begin his residence at Speyer with rigid exercises, which punished him for something that still seemed a perfectly natural and matter-of-course action on the part of any honest man. Yet the rector knew that he must not bend the bow too tensely, and Paul received as confessor the universally popular Pater Aloysus, whose gentle, quiet manner instantly won his confidence. The young man said no more about the vexatious incident of his journey. He was aware that a monk must allow himself to be unjustly treated without murmuring. Far different from the question as to whether he or this Brother Antonio was right were the troubles that tortured him. When he at last summoned courage to frankly confess his state of mind to kind Father Aloysus, complain of the feeling of emptiness and desolation that oppressed him, the strange joylessness and hopelessness that had come over him, his confessor instead of reproving him, said gently and kindly: "Be comforted, my son! Many a youth at the commencement of a singularly happy life has been tortured by such melancholy thoughts, as if some infinitely hard and sorrowful fate awaited him, but you know that for

us the morning star rises above such dismal mists and threatening clouds."

These kind words were balm to Paul's spirit, so sorely chafed by the restrictions of his monkish garb; never had he so gratefully felt the comfort afforded by the confessional. Besides, Pater Aloysus was to him a radiant example of the most punctilious fulfilment of duty. He longed to become like this aged, feeble old man, who devoted every moment of his existence to others, spending his days in the care of his penitents, the sick and poor. The young novice freely expressed these secret experiences in his next report of the guidance of his life, and in consequence was immediately removed to Heidelberg. The Superior thought that the youth, without any regular occupation, would wear himself out in fruitless study of his own heart; the young wine must be poured into a new cask if it was not to be spoiled; besides Pater Aloysus' peaceful nature was not the model to be recommended to younger monks in these times of conflict. So Paul received orders to obey a summons to Heidelberg which would soon reach him.

"You will there obtain a Superior, who conforms somewhat to the ways of the world," said Pater Aloysus as he bade him farewell. "He is known by the name of Doctor Pigavetta and I even fear he has allowed worldly views to enter his will and heart, but he is more energetic than I, and possibly his restless eagerness will be more beneficial to you than the monotonous society of an old man like me, who perhaps already wearies you. But if you ever feel the need of rest for your soul, you will always be welcome to Brother Aloysus."

A straight road led from Speyer to Heidelberg and this time Paul was firmly resolved to blindly obey the new Superior, as his vow commanded. He knocked modestly at the door of the house at the Klingenthor, but his composure was subjected to a hard test when it opened and his travelling-companion, Doctor Antonio, stood before him. The priest had on the same velvet cap and dark cloak he had worn on the journey, and evidently enjoyed the novice's alarm. Paul quickly controlled himself and asked for Doctor Pigavetta.

"Go up stairs and you will find him," replied Doctor Antonio coldly. A succession of flights of winding stairs led Paul to the upper story of the tower, where Pigavetta's name was on a door. In reply to his knock a voice that sounded familiar bade him enter, and when he did so he saw the very man whom he had just met in travelling-dress at the lower door, seated, clad in a loose dressing-gown, at a table where he seemed absorbed in the study of books and papers.

This spectacle completely bewildered him. Which Antonio was the right one? He bowed his head and humbly waited for this eccentric stranger to accost him.

"Your credentials!" said the Superior coldly.

Paul, with trembling hands, delivered his papers, written in cipher.

The other, after perusing them, said with an expression of quiet contempt: "I think our first acquaintance, Fratello, will make obedience to your new Superior easier for you in future. You may rely upon it that when I give you strange orders I have my own reasons for doing so, and you will henceforth be more sparing of your little store of worldly wisdom. You might have judged that a man of my appearance did not care for the few

paltry groschen at Innsbruck, if you had not been a mere bookworm. Now that your own wisdom has brought you this knowledge and experience, perhaps you will think proper to remember your vow of obedience. At any rate, we now know each other well enough to accommodate ourselves to each other." Pigavetta paused, a sarcastic smile hovered around his lips.

So Paul had been committed to the hands of the same Doctor Antonio with whom he had travelled. His heart was filled with furious rage, but he was determined to give his Superior no cause to again accuse him of disobedience. He remained in the humble attitude that beseemed a novice in the presence of a monk. But the latter's jesting mood again appeared. He laughingly patted the youth on the shoulder, saying: "Cheer up, cheer up, Brother. 'Merry people are worth twice as much as sorrowful ones,' says St. Ignatius, and the vow of your Order doesn't require you to hang your head. So welcome to Heidelberg, and first of all you must pledge me."

While speaking the old Jesuit took a decanter of water, poured it into a cask by the wall, and then turned a faucet from which red wine instantly flowed. "Drink to our welfare," he said, as if nothing had happened. Paul sipped the liquor but, as it was strong and spicy, set the glass back only half empty on the table, saying:

"Excuse me, Reverend Father, I am not used to drink wine."

"As you choose," replied the other, taking the glass and pouring the contents back into the cask; then he opened the same faucet from which wine had just flowed and filled the glass with clear water, with which he cleansed it and set it aside. Paul felt that his head

was beginning to swim from all this excitement, and leaned on a chair that stood before him which at once began to sing and play.

"If you are ill," said Doctor Pigavetta, "go out into the open air and come to the college at vespers. I will then introduce you to the teachers." With these words Paul was dismissed. Not knowing what to think of these tricks, and walking as if in a dream, he reached the door of the house. Doctor Antonio, clad in his travelling-costume, suddenly stood before him again. He seemed to be returning from a walk and said quietly: "It is fortunate I have met you, here is the gold piece I borrowed at Innsbruck," and then coolly turned his back upon him.

Oppressed with a dull sense of bewilderment, Paul stood before the door of the mysterious house. The wine, to which he was unaccustomed, went to his head, so he walked to a clear little fountain at his right, to wash his eyes and cool his temples. Then, while quietly thinking the matter over, he could not doubt that Doctor Antonio was making fun of him. The tricks of transforming the wine and the musical chair were too childish to awe him, but the thing that made him most sceptical was the return of the borrowed money. As Antonio had not paid the tavern bill at Innsbruck, he owed him *two* gold pieces and several small coins; true, it might be that the one bestowed was a luck-penny, but hastily-drawn conclusions did not seem to confirm this view. The monk's magic arts therefore appeared very equivocal to the novice. The twofold appearance in the tower room and at the door, Paul finally explained to himself as an arrangement he had frequently seen in his brother's architectural plans.

There was evidently some way by which Pigavetta could get up and down in the tower more quickly than his visitors, who were obliged to use the winding stairs. But in proportion as his superstitious fear subsided, he felt more and more discomfort at the thought of being assigned, in a strange city, to the sole charge of a man who bore two names, reckoned very inaccurately, and either feigned or possessed the gift of being his own double.

Yet the new vocation upon which he had entered soothed his annoyance for a time. All went well during several months, but when the winter was past and the soft breezes from Italy swept over the land, the old feeling of melancholy returned to the lonely youth. The mournful thoughts dispelled by the society of the excellent Pater Aloysius assailed him with twofold strength. He wandered about in a state of mental depression that paralyzed his best efforts. This was the condition in which Felix found him, when after a long separation the brothers were again united.

The disease that had attacked Paul may perhaps be best described by contrasting it with the health of his brother, who had spent a winter with him in Venice.

Felix had followed Paul to the latter city and, amid the many mechanical studies his profession imposed, the young artist was full of eagerness to profit by the opportunity for wider culture the college afforded him, and soon became even more gratefully devoted to the Order than Paul. Here the architect learned the theory of his art, mathematics, geometry, mechanics, without which he must always have remained a bungler. His intellect found nourishment in the rhetorical and poetic exercises and, when permitted to cast aside chisel and work-apron, it was recreation and joy to hear philosophy, literature,

and poetry so clearly, didactically, and from his point of view appropriately discussed at the college lectures. He saw little of the inner hierarchical machinery and when the Order obtained for him a really brilliant position in the Netherlands, he left the college with a boundless sense of gratitude though he found little opportunity to show it outwardly. His brother's experience was precisely opposite. To him the last portion of his college life had been one long agony, for the ambitious excitement of so many years was now beginning to avenge itself. Accustomed to applause, even the largest measure that could be granted to a novice no longer satisfied him. The clearness in the exposition of science which delighted his more unlearned brother, already seemed to him shallow; the bonds which Felix did not even notice already began to oppress him, and while secretly far less devoted to the Order, he strove to labor more strenuously externally, because he thought exhausting outward activity would stifle his mental uneasiness, deaden the feelings of dissatisfaction, and appease the hunger for happiness stirring within. Therefore, without troubling himself much about Pigavetta, he eagerly entered upon the work allotted to him at Heidelberg. After the long period of preparation he at last confronted a task as important as he had imagined. To the world a subordinate member of a theological seminary, he felt himself the historical lever destined to move a whole population into a different religious channel. The idea that a philological teacher from his lowly position could overthrow the elector's church, was fantastic enough, but Paolo clung firmly to the words of the founder of his Order, "if God sends you across the sea, go on a ship, but if there be no ship, then cross on a

plank." While in Speyer he had received the command to obtain the degree of a Magister in the liberal arts at the elector's university, a task he performed with the utmost ease. Pigavetta had then ordered him to play the part of a good Calvinist, to do which he only needed to abuse the Lutherans as much as possible; this, too, he accomplished with hearty good-will. But one day the monk gave him an order in cipher from the Provincial commanding him to pass an examination *pro ministerio* before the consistory of the Reformed Church and make his appearance in Heidelberg as a preacher. For the first time he hesitated. His better nature rebelled against the hierarchical lie. He was willing to play the farce of being a Calvinist temporarily, but was too proud to make it the purport of his life. Even when told that he must become a Reformed pastor, in order to promulgate the Catholic dogma, it aroused a feeling of discomfort, though theoretically he shared his teacher's opinion that any means was right if it served the highest good, the Church. Many long nights he tossed sleeplessly to and fro upon his bed, for he knew that he was entering a downward path. Yet the proposal found a powerful ally in the dormant oratorical talent within him which longed for an audience, a pulpit, the applause so painfully missed. He was weary of explaining the Latin authors to the sleepy pupils of the Institute. With how much enthusiasm he daily introduced into his lessons descriptions of Italy to awake among these young Germans a feeling of homesickness for Rome, but they yawned in his face. With what ingenuity he had sought out passages in Seneca and Plato, to which he could add quotations from the Fathers of the Church in support of the Catholic dogma, but his worthy scholars cut huge

holes in the oak benches and instead of pondering on his subtle inferences drawn from Festino and Barbara, thought only of the waitress of the same name at the nearest tavern. While in rapturous words he glorified the great names of the past history of the Church, the pupils pelted each other with paper pellets, or smeared each other's seats with shoemaker's wax. Rome or Wittenberg was to Paul the great question of the day, to them the matter of greatest importance was whether the Schützenhof or the Stag had the better beer. The heretics were evidently not to be reached from the side of their hopeful progeny, and he had soon grown weary of "seizing the bull by the horns," as an Italian proverb ran. Then came the unexpected order from his Superior to transfer the central point of his activity to the pulpit. Disgusted at his ill-success with the sleepy-headed youngsters and thirsting for praise, it was all the more easy for him to assume the equivocal part assigned him by the Order. His secret scruples, too, were soon silenced when his eloquence met with the most brilliant success. All hearts melted before the Italian's musical voice, graceful bearing and bewitching foreign accent, and Paolo's boldest dreams of a great counter reformation seemed about to be fulfilled as he saw, Sunday after Sunday, the ranks of his hearers increase. The intoxication of success deadened the warning voice within that told him he was acting a hypocritical part, and he was therefore by no means pleased when the Countess Palatine in the convent of Neuburg turned her eyes upon him and withdrew him from his promising career. Winning back a lost convent already seemed to him too trivial an affair for his talents, and he felt almost angry that he was

compelled to again learn the half-forgotten Mass and hold a clandestine service which, with the elector's hatred of the "accursed idolatry," might perhaps cost him dear. Moreover, the old ladies' confessions, mental condition, the monotonous story of their sorrowful moods, spiritual tortures, and great temptations were by no means refreshing to him. He was young, and felt attracted towards younger people. For this very natural reason the instruction he was obliged to give the young girls in the convent-school did not become the burden it had been in the Institute. Fresh and fair as the shining young chestnut leaves that had just burst from their sheaths, the children and girls with their smoothly-brushed hair sat before him, eagerly hanging upon his lips. They understood as if by intuition what he wished to say, and in the atmosphere of love and enthusiasm which here surrounded him, it seemed as if his withered heart began to throb again and be agitated with feelings which had been slumbering ever since he had gazed in Naples at the pale, slender woman, lying on her bier, who had watched over his childhood. Though at the Institute he had usually been glad when the lessons were over, now he cheerfully took charge of the children during their walk to the meadow. Sitting beside the murmuring spring under the tall beeches, he taught the little ones to build altars and make crosses, showed them how the angels glided through the thickets or looked down from the sky in the guise of clouds, and charged them to carry a greeting from every child to the Mother of God. At other times he made the little ones walk in pilgrimages and processions, singing Catholic tunes to unobjectionable words. So they played in the Catholic way without their parents' knowledge. True, the wife of the con-

vent miller once complained that her little girl had marked the Holy Virgin's name on her arm, and her boy Reinhard had cut it on an apple-tree. But the abbess consoled her by saying the little girl would be protected from fever and the apple-tree would probably bear twice as well.

The Magister also had quiet talks and religious lessons for the older pupils, and the young girls acknowledged that never before had they realized how naughty, nay, really wicked they were, but the kind Magister understood how to console them so tenderly that they had never been so happy. Yet how did it happen that at the same time Lydia Erast complained that lately the least pleasant part was always assigned her in the games, and that whenever "Look out! the Fox is about," was played, Clara and Bertha, who had formerly been her best friends always slapped her the hardest. How did it happen that Paul, usually so grave, sometimes came in at the lesson hours with a happy smile on his lips, which had never been seen in the college, and instead of reading his breviary recited aloud the Odes to Lalage to the old beeches behind the convent? How it chanced he did not know himself. At first his eye had rested inadvertently on the fair little head, as a young teacher giving a lesson stares fixedly at a shining button, a certain pillar, or the corner of a school-bench. Then the blue eyes raised to his with touching earnestness enthralled him and he was soon forced to confess that he really bestowed his instruction solely on this sweet child, that only for her he arranged his material, that he saw and thought only of her and listened only to her answers, though she was far behind the others in intellectual acquirements. A vague yearning

took possession of him to see this one face in all his lesson hours. Thus began the troubles that robbed his days of peace, his nights of sleep, and threw him into the contradictory, sullen mood in which Felix found him.

CHAPTER VII.

To have allusion made to a secret hitherto concealed from ourselves is often like the fateful word in the fairy-tale, which wakes the Enchanted Beauty or dispels the dreams of the Seven Sleepers. This unwelcome word, which roused him from his dangerous life of shadows and thrust him forth into the keen morning air and clear light of day, had been twice shouted into the young preacher's ears on that momentous day, yet he would not hear, for he did not wish to awake. This, far more than the coldness towards ties of blood that beseeemed a monk, was the true reason why Paolo Laurenzano had treated his brother whom he really loved so distantly. It had not been necessary for Felix to inform him of the jests people ventured to make about him and the beautiful Lydia. Accustomed as a pupil of the college to have his eyes and ears everywhere, he had heard the name Wegewarte shouted as he turned his steps towards his lodgings that morning after the lesson was over, and as he had really met the fair-haired girl several times on that path and exchanged a few pleasant words with her, he instantly understood the connection of affairs and went back through the woods to the high-road without entering his room. Vainly did he strive

to banish the ugly word Wegewarte from his memory. It was evident that all the young girls in the convent knew what was going on between him and Lydia — what he shrunk from acknowledging to himself. Then his brother in the very first hour of their meeting, had rudely touched his well-guarded secret and he had angrily thrust the hand away, perhaps because it was the only one that possessed the right to raise the veil. A feeling of inexpressible rage and bitterness stole over him as he stood alone on the high-road gazing down at the river. Had he wished to put the uneasiness that oppressed him into plain words, he would have said to himself: “Dear Magister Laurenzano, the pious Fathers in the college taught you that dissimulation is a weapon with which one wise man can vanquish a hundred fools. But this weapon is sharp and double-edged, so that it often wounds him who secretly carries it about, ere he can use it against others. Had you openly appeared in your true character, that of a priest of the Roman Church, this fair-haired German maiden would never have gazed at you with such earnest eyes and you would not have stolen her heart; or if you were what you seem, a Calvinist preacher, you might go to her father to-morrow and ask his daughter’s hand and I know he would not refuse you. So whom have you injured most by your dissimulation? Yourself, only yourself. Why don’t you put an end to these deceptions and delusions?” If the discontented man had wished to give himself a straightforward answer, it would probably have been simply: “I, Paolo Laurenzano, *primus omnium* of the college at Venice, am too good for these people. I have not toiled day and night, and renounced every youthful pleasure,

to give up my whole career now for the sake of a pretty child. I was taught to believe that every priest wears under his tonsure the halo of a saint. A song was sung to me of the generalship, the red hat, the tiara, and am I to end my days in this commonplace world, in this little German town as a teacher of these unlicked young cubs? Homesickness for the blue sky of Italy would deter me from adopting a faith that would prevent my return."

Some touch of this unconscious desire roused him from his torpor, and as a fresh east wind blew from the mountains, a more energetic mood gained the mastery. "I will some day go back to Italy as a mighty conqueror, not remain secluded among the fogs of the Odenwald. Ah!" he exclaimed, "if I could bring to pass some great awakening? If like the noble Archbishop Borromeo in Veltlin, I could accomplish some grand conversion of the heretics, especially the women." The thought inspired him. "You must act, not dream. You must advance to the assault, without further delay. If they drive you forth, if they kill you, so much the better. What is this life worth that we should not risk it for the sake of our flag?" And he imagined the wrath of the stout German Elector, when he learned that the daughters of all his nobles had returned to the Catholic faith. He at once decided upon the means he was to use for the purpose. He would introduce Loyola's exercises into the convent, for he could obtain a more rapid success by prayer, contemplation, and tuition than by perpetual preaching and catechizing. The Catholic faith must be created in the Catholic way, not by the tiresome methods of the heretics." Matters must move faster; the fortress must be captured by storm or not at all. But with

whom should he begin? The old ladies? They were either already won over or unassailable. The young, whose imagination was vivid, whose soul-life could be shaped and guided, must be filled with enthusiasm for the lovely Madonna and Child and then carry the others by the force of their example. The worthy Magister did not perceive that the Child Jesus holding his church banner again assumed the guise of the rogue Cupid. With long strides he climbed the path to the convent; reaching his room, he hastily thrust a little book into his pocket, and then requested the portress to announce him to the Lady Abbess. The Countess Palatine an elderly dame with mild, delicate features, received him with the quiet, equable kindness that during a life-time of good intentions and baffled hopes had become a second nature to her, and asked him his wishes. Her matronly face, spite of its mildness, had the immobile expression produced by years of conventual seclusion, and though she had been obliged to lay aside the large white cap of a nun she still held her head as straight as if the huge snowy wings rustled over it. But her cool, repellent manner only roused the young teacher to a higher degree of enthusiasm, and the ardent Italian vividly described the torture of his inactivity. "No storm is worse than an ocean calm," said St. Ignatius, "and many enemies are less dangerous than none." He either must return to Italy or venture and win something. He had not come to Germany to hold clandestine religious services in a half deserted convent or to teach Greek particles to half-grown boys; he must be favored with some success or quit the field. "For weeks," he said, at the close of his passionate appeal, "I have been explaining the Catholic dogma, praising

monastic life and celibacy, and exalting virginity above marriage. On every occasion, as my instruction directs, I have extolled the blessing of relics, the veneration for and prayers to the saints, the stations of the cross, pilgrimages, abstinence, fasting, indulgences, jubilees, festivals, the custom of lighting candles, pictures and other aids to piety and worship of God, but what has it availed? Everything remains just as it was before. If you cannot decide upon some more positive step, I will give up the struggle. We shall reach no goal in this way."

The Countess Palatine's eyes had rested on the young speaker with immovable composure and her hand moved as if she were letting the beads of her rosary slip through her fingers, a habit into which she always relapsed whenever any matter claimed an unusual degree of attention. If Paul's youthful enthusiasm and the burning flush that crimsoned his pale face had not so greatly beautified the noble outline of his features, the old princess would have coldly silenced him — she disliked excitable natures. But in this case she felt a maternal interest in the handsome young man and her own life taught her that, if we once submit to waiting, we may often wait forever. In reply to her question what he meant by a more positive step, the Magister placed before her a little book that bore the simple title: "*Exercitia Spiritualia*."

"We cannot teach the Catholic religion in the Protestant way," said Paul, "but must pursue the Catholic method, and here is the long-tested discipline by which our famous general, St. Ignatius, wins more souls for our holy Church than by sermons or teaching."

The abbess turned the leaves of the little volume, asking somewhat distrustfully : " How do these *Exercitia* differ from other Christian works ? "

" The heretics' prayer-books," replied Paolo, " try to teach the knowledge of God, for the Protestants wish to comprehend Him, to fully understand Him. St. Ignatius, on the contrary, has pointed out in this little book the way in which God may be felt, perceived, enjoyed in all His sweetness. The soul's longing for God cannot be appeased by knowledge, he says in the introduction, only by our own inner experience, and to guide this intuition of the heart is the task of the *Exercitia Spiritualia*. These exercises are effective prayers, through which by exercising our senses, by stretching our hands and bodies, by wrestling and devotion, we battle for the consciousness of His presence and thus come nearer to Him. The saintly Father here briefly points out the subjects on which the person must fix his attention with all his energy. They are the same the heretics recognize—the fall of the angels, the plan of salvation, the mystery of the Incarnation, eternal condemnation and everlasting torture in hell. But understand me, noble lady! The Lutheran believes this, ponders over it, seeks to understand it. Yet merely hearing of or reading of these things brings us no nearer to the Deity. The soul must *see* them, perceive their reality through the senses, attain the power of beholding a vision. This little book contains directions to show how we may succeed in making the invisible palpable—beholding, tasting, feeling with all our senses the eternal majesty. Contrasted with Calvinistic sobriety, the volume will enable these poor frozen souls to enjoy all the blissful fervor of the old

faith. Only those who like Saint Franciscus and Saint Katharine have thus beheld the Mother of God and the Saints, really belong to us. This is the divine lesson of the "Application of the Senses" as Saint Ignatius devised it. So permit me, most gracious Countess Palatine, to use this sole effectual method with our pupils."

Sabina silently and with distrust turned the leaves of the little book.

"Is this really your whole Discipline?" she asked, remembering numerous scandals that had reached her ears about such exercises.

"The scourge, the bloody atonement, nay even fasting we cannot again introduce," replied Laurenzano, "at least not yet, but devout maidens by praying at the foot of the cross, by kissing the instruments of torture, by tears and sighs, can atone for the outrage inflicted upon the tree of life at Golgotha in an age which spat upon and buffeted the King of Kings. There is a blessing in woman's tears, and the maiden who has wept over the sorrows of the Mother of God is absolved from the curse of the heretic. Whatever else I may add will be perfectly innocent things, pictures, relics, flowers, a few reminders of death and the grave. You know how in the Eleusinian Mysteries the initiated were guided to the truth by both sombre and cheerful symbols. Grant me also some aids of this kind. The symbol is the language of our Church, only the heretic is content with the bare word."

"And on which of the pupils do you intend to use these exercises first?" asked the abbess curiously.

"We can go by seniority."

"Then Fraulein von Eppingen, Fraulein von Steinach, and Lydia Liebler would come first."

Paul nodded assent.

"I fear," replied the abbess, her hand again seeking the absent rosary, "you will urge these young souls to a fanaticism that will injure the *sanitudo corporis*. These young girls were not entrusted to my care to be trained for visionaries."

"If the Lady Superior of this convent perceives any harmful results, she has the power to stop the *Exercitia* at any moment," Paul answered submissively. "But I am sure that as soon as you learn to know the blessing this little book contains, you yourself and all your Sisters will undertake these exercises."

"Well then, try them in God's name. How will you arrange the matter?"

"According to the directions of Saint Ignatius himself, the person must study in the privacy of his room during some quiet morning or evening hour one of the chapters here mentioned. The doors and windows must be closed, the day-light excluded. The kneeling penitent must fix his mind upon the stories here briefly related. I will read this portion aloud to the young girls and request them to remain in their devout posture until the object of the exercise is attained."

"You cannot hold these exercises in the rooms, you must go into the chapel."

"Then it must be closed and the light subdued," replied Paolo. "All distracting impressions are to be excluded or we cannot possibly produce the right mood."

"I will lock the outer door," said the abbess. "The one leading to my corridor must remain open that I may pass in and out. I will not disturb you."

Paul bowed. "When do you desire to begin?"

“At sunset.”

The good abbess noticed that the dark Italian had selected the fairest daughters of the Odenwald as suitable tools of the Church, but repressing her suspicion she went to the three young girls and told them that the Magister, for the purpose of their spiritual progress, intended to hold religious exercises with them in the evening. If they were ready, they might remain in the chapel after vespers. They all blushed, but not one refused.

The Magister had visited the chapel several times at noon, bringing with him several objects, some from his own room, some from the town. In the evening the Vesper service proceeded as usual. When the last stirring voluntary of the organ had died away, Paolo stepped before the altar, where he found the three girls kneeling in a very troubled mood on the front benches. A mystical twilight pervaded the dim church. The young priest repeated a prayer, and then made his three friends a short address similar in purport to what he had said to Sabina. In order to be certain of the existence of a higher world, we must not only think of it, but must feel and experience it. For this purpose a saintly man had invented the exercises he now intended to go through with them. Their souls in this hour should discuss their faith with Jesus Himself, as friend talked to friend, or servant to master. He desired to aid them in this. He then directed the first of the three young girls to kneel in the shadow behind the altar, the back of which to-day was adorned with a picture representing in bold, vivid outlines the Holy Family in Joseph's hut. Next, taking Bertha von Steinach, who was trembling with excitement, by the

hand he led her into the gloomy side-chapel. Before the altar at which he bade her kneel stood a large basket of roses.

"Pray here, my dear child," he said, "and when you have devoutly repeated the Paternoster, Ave Maria, Salve Regina, Gloria and Magnificat, throw aside these flowers of spring and meditate on what is concealed behind the roses of life."

Then, gently supporting Lydia by the arm, he led her up the steps to the organ-loft, where in a dusky corner half concealed by a curtain was a chest supplied with a round glass. Above it was a Latin inscription: "Mirror of Memory for Brother Paulus, which will admonish him of his true condition."

"When you have prayed," said the Magister, forcing her on her knees by a light pressure on her young shoulder, "look through this glass, it will show you what awaits you."

Then entering the pulpit, he read aloud with frequent pauses from his little volume a meditation which, in rude, fantastic outlines and incoherent, visionary language, pointed out the paths the imagination of the devout should enter. "I see," he began, in a low, mysterious tone, "the three Persons of the Deity gazing at the whole earth, filled with people who must go down into hell. I see," he continued, "the Holy Trinity resolve that, for the redemption of these poor sinners, the second Person must assume human nature. . . I can see," he read, after another stop, "the whole wide surface of the earth and perceive in one corner Mary's hut. The sacred Beings stand around the manger of Bethlehem. A ray of light falls on the divine Child and I hear the voices of the heavenly

host singing: 'Glory to God in the highest, on earth peace, good-will to men.'"

Silence reigned in the chapel; the setting sun cast its last golden rays on the walls. The odor of incense wafted from the altar diffused a stupefying atmosphere through the dusky chapel, and now low, sad, wailing notes, variations on the *Miserere* and *Tenebrae* played by the Italian, began to flow from the organ. The melody constantly returned to an air which rested like a leaden weight on the young listeners' souls and paralyzed any free exercise of the mental faculties. Then the accords swelled louder, flooding the dim chapel with a tempest of sound. The notes united and separated again; one sobbing tone expressed the sinner's profound submission, contrite humility, the other spoke in trumpet notes full of sublime, divine majesty. Then everything again mingled in chaotic striving and struggling. It seemed as if Earth herself was opening her mouth for agonized complaint and Heaven was replying. Such must be the storm of sound when the peaks of the Alps talk to each other, or the ocean calls to the hurricane that roars over it. All the woe of this finite life cries out in these voices to the throne of the Most High, and the divine mercy dominates it as the Invisible hovers over His worlds.

Meantime Clara von Eppingen, a stout Swabian blonde, kneeling before the altar had become completely absorbed in gazing at the Holy Family. How sweetly the Madonna bent over the little fair-haired Christ-child, whose fat little hands pulled at her ruff; with what paternal pride Saint Joseph stood beside them, while Saint Anna watched the whole group. These holy personages gazed kindly and cheerily down

at plump Clara, and the strongly-marked features, the vivid coloring of the painting made a deep impression upon the young girl thus revelling in blissful dreams. Had she been a young wife her children would doubtless have resembled the brown-eyed Madonna or fair-haired Christ-child; the Magister, in directing her to kneel for hours before this bright-hued picture had treated her as Jacob treated the flocks of Laban. Yet the thoroughly healthy girl would doubtless have been perfectly at ease during these exercises, had not the moaning and wailing of the organ sometimes startled her, and had not a scream of terror from the chapel, a cry for help from the organ-loft reached her ears.

In the side-chapel delicate, nervous Bertha von Steinach bowed her curly head over the fragrant roses and repeated her prayers. But when, as the Magister had commanded, she took out the flowers her warm hand touched a cold, smooth ball. Startled, she grasped it and drew out a skull, which stared at her with its hollow eye-sockets and grinning teeth. Trembling violently, she was about to replace it when some living creature rustled past her. It was a water-adder that Paul had hidden in the basket, and which now gliding quickly over the floor vanished behind the altar. This caused the excitable young girl to utter the cry of terror her friend Clara heard, and when she had recovered her self-command she saw at the bottom of the basket bloody nails, thorns to which clung locks of wool, scourges with little knots or leaden bullets at the ends, sharp spikes, wheels, and other instruments of mortification. So these, according to the Magister's words, were what lay concealed beneath

the flowers of life. In dull bewilderment she knelt before the basket from which the skull grinned scornfully at her and gave herself up unresistingly to the spell of the solemn notes flowing down from the organ.

Lydia had not fared much better with the Magister's gifts. She knelt before the "Mirror of Memory," but it was with great difficulty that she could collect her thoughts for prayer. The dark round glass seemed uncanny; she fancied she should see all the dead wives of Bluebeard if she looked in. But Paul's organ music soothed her and she summoned up courage to obey his command. A shrill cry for help escaped her lips as she cast a glance at the mirror. Directly before her she distinctly saw a monk in his cowl, but from this cowl her own pale, agitated face gazed at her with terror-stricken eyes. She shivered with a feverish chill and the notes of the organ pierced her inmost soul. She knelt long in the same spot ere she gathered strength to look the spectre in the face again. The same spectacle met her eyes; the monk sat rigid and motionless, but her own pale features appeared within the cowl. Again she uttered a cry of horror and her double's lips instantly parted. Then the glass grew dim and she was obliged to wipe it with her handkerchief. In doing so she perceived that her hand, with the handkerchief, appeared in the cowl, and she knew that she saw her own reflection. Vexed with the horrible apparition she pulled the cloth aside to satisfy her girlish curiosity by searching the matter to the bottom. Behind the curtain she beheld a painted monk, whose white cowl was filled with a mirror, so that whoever looked through the glass placed opposite must see his or her own face. Lydia angrily dropped the curtain. The impression made upon her

was different from what Paul had intended. She did not wonder why she saw her own features, spectrally distorted, in the garb of a recluse from the world, but felt disturbed because the Latin inscription, which contrary to the Italian's expectation, she understood, stated that this monkish dress was the true attire of Brother Paulus. The strangest, wildest fancies passed through her confused girlish brain, but she was suddenly startled from her bewildered visions, her half-troubled, half-blissful dreams, for the music stopped abruptly, unexpectedly, as if Death's cruel hand had seized the performer. The other two devotees were also roused from their chaos of excited emotions, but the Italian's melodious voice instantly echoed through the dark chapel: "I see the whole wide surface of the earth and perceive in one corner Mary's hut."

When he had read the meditation to the end, he slowly approached the young girl kneeling before the altar and after having turned the picture towards the wall gently laid his slender hand over her eyes, sending a feverish thrill through her whole frame, and asked: "Do you still see the Holy Family with the eyes of your soul?"

"I believe so," murmured Clara.

"Imagine the hut, the saints, their features, and their garments. You must see which stand in the light and which in the shadow, notice the colors of their clothing. You must touch their footprints, hear their garments rustle, feel their breath on your cheek ere you can be permitted to rise. When you have reached this point, say 'amen,' make the sign of the cross, and go away before your soul is paralyzed again." Bending towards her, he pressed a paternal kiss on the fragrant

locks of the blooming child, and then went to the second penitent, excitable, impassioned Bertha von Steinach, who trembling violently, lay stretched on the cold stone pavement before the skull and the instruments of martyrdom. Perceiving with a glow of satisfaction the effect of his work, he resolved to mould at his will the crushed spirit now pliant as wax in his hands.

"Do you know where the soul that once looked out from those hollow eye-sockets, dwells now?" he asked.

The young girl without rising shook her head.

"It is in the place of torment, and you must see it as it writhes in the mighty fires of Hell. Shut your eyes and gaze down into the desolate spaces where the flames are blazing. Do you hear the piteous cries of the condemned souls, their wails, lamentations, shrieks, and blasphemies against Christ. Do you smell the odor of sulphur, the breath of corruption, the stench of mire and slime that rises from below? Do you taste on your tongue the briny bitterness of the tears shed there? Do you feel on your fingers the flames in whose blaze the souls of the condemned are burning?"

"Ah! no! ah, no!" sighed the terrified child. The black-robed man knelt beside her. She felt his breath on her cheek, the convulsive trembling of his limbs as he wrestled in prayer, and heard him whisper in frenzied excitement: "I see millions, millions of people writhing and struggling in the everlasting flames. I see their eyes rolling in unutterable agony as their mutilated, mangled limbs quiver in horrible torments. Oh! how their bodies intertwine, how shrilly their shrieks of anguish rise, but the heavens are brass over their heads. Only the echo of their own cries resounds from above. But there, —

over there—and there again in the darkness grin the demons with birds' faces, frogs' bodies, eagles' claws! They hover like bats around the condemned souls, laughing at their tortures. Now they seize throngs of the agonized beings and hurl them into the caldron of burning sulphur. Do you see how the blue flames flare upward? Wherever any one tries to crawl out, the fiends lash him back with scourges made of vipers; do you see the one twining in the shape of a serpent around a woman, the toad on her body, and the imp that is kissing her with its bat's mouth? Now the devils are whispering together; how they gnash their teeth, how shrill their jeering laughter sounds! They are planning fresh tortures, sharper agonies. Do you see how they pour out the black pitch, and a column of red fire blazes up? Now the smoke shuts out the light and conceals the ruddy glow but the shrieks of pain grow louder. See how they turn their eyes towards us, stretch out their hands, beseeching us to help, to pray for them. . . . ”

“Oh! I can bear no more,” sighed the young girl—“oh! the smell of sulphur is so strong that it makes my head swim. I must go out.”

“Then go, my daughter, but keep faithfully in your heart all that you have seen.”

Clara von Eppingen and Lydia Erastus were still kneeling in their dark corners. The young priest again took his seat at the organ and played soft, soothing melodies, intended to relax the tension of the penitents souls. A light step in the chapel announced Clara's departure. Lydia still remained on her knees. The tall figure now approached her also. Did he resemble the archangel of God or the angel who in haughty arrogance

had fallen from Heaven, as he thus moved silently through the dusk towards the motionless girl? Never had Paolo looked handsomer. His dark eyes still glowed with the light of the ecstatic mood into which his excited feelings had carried him, and a varying flush drove the pallor from his cheeks.

"Do you feel the sweetness of the divine love?" he whispered. "Lydia, do you see the Saviour's smiling lips?" The kneeling girl felt him bow his face nearer her head, her breast heaved more and more passionately, a deeper blush crimsoned her cheeks. He clasped her hand as if in the unconscious fervor of prayer, and Lydia felt how his fingers were trembling. "Can you see nothing at all?" he faltered.

"Alas, whenever I look, I see dark brown eyes fixed upon me." And covered with sweet confusion, her face suffused with blushes, she rose from her knees.

Paul's last remnant of self-control vanished. Clasp- ing her in his arms with passionate yearning, his burning lips were pressed to hers. Lydia yielded unresistingly to his embrace. Minute after minute passed by, seeming but a single instant to the happy pair. Suddenly a cold, severe voice exclaimed: "Are these your exercises, Magister Laurenzano?" and the abbess stepped from behind the organ.

"Go to your room, Lydia," she said to the trembling girl, and when left alone with Paolo she drew the curtain back from the window, admitting the last gleam of day- light into the dark nook. The young priest was cower- ing on the nearest bench, with his head bowed on a prayer-desk, and uttered no word of reply to the irate Superior's torrent of reproach. "So you cast these mystic, sensual images into the souls of innocent chil-

dren and kindle an impure fire to ruin them! Shame, shame on you a thousand times! 'Twere far better to use violence to compass your evil designs than to poison unsuspecting hearts in this way!"

A moan, like that of a stag stricken by the hunter's arrow reached the angry abbess' ear. She saw that the youth was writhing in an agony of remorseful grief, and a feeling of pity for the poor young fellow stirred her kind heart.

"I will believe, Magister Paul," she said more gently, "that you did not intend to proceed to the extremes I witnessed and I thank the saints that they would not let me rest in my room, but guided me hither before a still greater misfortune happened; but you now see what comes of such juggling, which the Evil One himself invented to give the heretics cause for complaint against us. The gardener shall take all these things back to your room at once. If such *Exercitia* must be held, I will direct them myself, as the rules of every well-ordered convent prescribe. You must return to your lodgings in Heidelberg as soon as it can be done without injury to your reputation or ours. I am for a good repute in all things, and public report must not defame us."

With these words the kind-hearted lady left him alone in the chapel, from which at the end of an hour he groped his way out along the wall, like a person suddenly stricken with fever.

The abbess had gone to Lydia, whom to her surprise she found by no means so overwhelmed with grief as she had expected. Indeed, the light of happiness sparkled in the young girl's gentle eyes.

"What shall I say to your conduct in allowing

yourself to be kissed in the church by a priest?" the lady superior began sternly.

"Oh! forgive me, reverend Abbess," sighed Lydia blushing. "It was the first time. The Magister means honestly by me, and my father will make no objection to our marriage."

The abbess laughed scornfully. "Simpleton, don't you know that Laurenzano is a Catholic priest, and neither can marry nor desires to do so?"

But the harsh words had scarcely escaped her lips ere she regretted them, for Lydia stared at her as if she were losing her senses. Every drop of blood had receded from the young girl's cheeks, her eyes were unnaturally dilated, and their large black pupils were fixed intently on the abbess' face. Then, bursting into convulsive sobs, she cried: "It is not true. It is not true. Oh! mother, surely it is not true?"

The old nun drew the girl to her heart. Her maternal instincts awoke in the presence of the young creature's heartrending grief. "Be calm, my child, be calm. The misfortune is not so great as you suppose. You do not really know the disloyal priest. You love the black-robed youth in the pulpit, you have never seen the real Laurenzano. The object of your love is an imaginary being created by your own fancy. You must efface the vision from your mind, that is all. Nothing can result from it. Laurenzano has come to convert us. He would be scoffed at, if he allowed himself to be converted by your blue eyes."

"I want to go back to my father," sobbed the young girl. "I don't want to stay here."

"You must first regain your calmness, my child. I cannot take you back to your father so. Besides, he

must never learn what has happened here. The elector would have Laurenzano scourged out of the country." Lydia gazed at the Countess Palatine in terror, but the latter kissed her forehead, undressed her, and helped her to bed. Then the old nun sat a long time beside the girl, telling her of her own youth and the matrimonial plans she, too, had cherished. The full stream of kindly feeling which the usually unmoved abbess displayed in these stories exerted their beneficent influence on poor Lydia. When the lady superior opened the door to leave the room, she saw with displeasure the hasty retreat of two old nuns who had been listening. Light steps also glided into the adjoining cells. Sabina instantly summoned the Sisters to a meeting to close their lips, for she knew that their love of gossip was no whit less than their curiosity.

When her maternal friend had gone, Lydia said to herself: "So the Mirror of Memory which his spiritual tyrants have given him is intended to prevent his forgetting that he is a monk." She imagined how he would probably look in the cowl in which she had seen her own frightened face. But she had already experienced too many emotions. Her eyes closed, and she soon lay wrapped in a deep slumber. Bertha von Steinach, sleeping in the next room, was visited by far more troubled dreams, haunted by the dreary gulfs of hell and the tortures of the condemned souls. More than once she started up, crying out that something was burning, that she could smell the sulphur. "Take away the skull," she shrieked again, "see how the worms are crawling out of the eyes."

Magister Laurenzano, whose exercises had caused all this trouble, sat in his room, his head resting against

the sash of the open window. He did not seek his couch all night and when morning dawned took St. Ignatius' little volume, which lay before him, and read on the last page: "Take, O Lord, my liberty, my memory, my reason, and my will." It was futile. He could not pray. Troubled and deeply agitated, he rushed off to the mountains.

CHAPTER VIII.

"I SHALL really be obliged to look up my brother at the Stag," said Meister Felix one evening, after again waiting all day long for Paul to come to the castle. He threw aside his chisel and working-apron and went down to the market-place, where he passed through the well-known door of the tavern into a back room where the Heidelberg pastors were wont to gather around a large oak table. He found the place still empty; the low, vaulted apartment was only lighted by a single lamp and at the table itself sat a stout, grey-haired man dressed in black. His face was flushed with wine-bibbing and he had a jolly red nose. "The Gospel from the country," thought Felix, as bowing respectfully he sat down beside the clergyman, whom he fancied he had seen before.

"Did you empty this jug alone, reverend sir?" he asked the contented toper.

"Man is a timorous, faint-hearted creature," replied the other unctuously. "I, too, thought at first I should not be able to get through with it, and now, with God's assistance, I am on the point of ordering another."

"But for His marvellous aid you might then scarcely be able to find your chamber-door," said the artist laughing.

"What do you know about it?" returned the other with a reproving glance. "One on whom God has bestowed the power of carrying off four measures of wine is ungrateful to the creator of all good gifts if he drinks only three." With these words he loudly rattled the tin lid of his stone jug, and a hoarse voice called from the adjoining room: "Directly, Herr Pastor!" Then a merry-looking little man with thick red hair appeared and removed the minister's jug.

"And I suppose I'm to bring you a barrel of water and a thimble-full of wine, Herr Italiano?" said the little fellow, who had known Felix when he lodged at the Stag.

"As usual, Klaus," replied Felix smiling, upon which a small glass of wine and a flagon of water were set before him.

As the artist now looked at his neighbor more closely and then glanced at the queer cup-bearer, he suddenly remembered that he had once seen the pair together during the last few days.

"Wasn't it Klaus whom I met in your company in the anteroom of the new palace?" he asked the pastor.

Herr Adam Neuser, for he was the quiet toper, made a wry face as if his wine suddenly tasted of the cask. "He was formerly the court-fool," he replied. "But the new-fashioned devotees have abolished the office of a merry counsellor. The Italian court-preachers want our gracious sovereign to play the fool himself. They would not grant him a pension either; that was why he wanted to complain to the elector. All in vain. Who

knows, perhaps I, too, shall yet be tapster to mine host of the Stag to save myself from starving." And he angrily drained a tankard of wine.

"Well, Neuser, how fares the early rising?" cried a deep bass voice belonging to an ecclesiastic of stately bearing who had just entered. "It was a capital idea of our mutual friend Olevianus to punish you by appointing you morning-preacher. Ha! ha! ha!"

"I owe him a grudge for that, Herr Inspector," replied the red-faced Neuser, "and I believe the time will come when we shall drive away the Trevians, Silesians, and Frenchmen from South Germany, where they have no business to be."

"You forget the Italians," said Felix.

"No one has had any cause for complaint against your brother," replied Pastor Willing, who had entered with Inspector Sylvan, a tall, fair-haired man whose features though attractive were by no means intellectual, and who looked as if he might be fond of chess but not of preaching. "Magister Laurenzano behaves modestly, as beseems a stranger, is an acceptable colleague and likes the Calvinists no better than we do, — so let him be a Papist in secret if he chooses. Ten bishops wouldn't torment us as much as one Olevianus."

"Of course," Neuser went on, "I mean him and all the rest of the needy wretches who have pounced upon our beautiful Palatinate like a hog on a sack of oats, and now that they are firmly ensconced, think nothing is good enough for them. Do you know what that vagabond Silesian, Ursinus, reported to the elector, when His Royal Highness was recently in Amberg? 'To answer briefly,' he wrote, 'it is my Christian opinion that there are not six worthy pastors in the whole

Palatinate of the Rhine.' These were his own words. May the Königstuhl and Heiligenberg fall on his arrogant Silesian pate at once! if we're not Christian enough for him."

"Then cursing is a part of religion too," muttered the waiter, vexed with the pastor, who to give emphasis to his strong language struck the table so violently that the glasses rattled and the liquor in his tankard ran over the brim.

"Ho, ho, you are hasty, Brother Colleague," cried the falsetto voice of a little fat man, who looked comically like a disguised porpoise, and who was introduced to Felix as Pastor Suter from Feudenheim. Seating himself beside Sylvan, he said cordially :

"Under my Inspector's protection Lützelsachsener tastes like Ingelheimer. But hasn't our Adam been shamefully treated," he continued, patting Neuser on the shoulder, "our Adam, a man without whom the Stag couldn't get along at all!"

"And who has the largest congregation in Heidelberg," muttered Klaus.

"How so?" asked the Inspector.

"Why, it takes in all the people who don't go to church."

The others laughed, but Neuser cast an angry glance at the jester : "Be off to your cask, tapster!"

"Whoever fiddles the truth, gets the bow rattling about his ears," retorted Klaus as he retired, while the low room echoed with the preachers' shouts of laughter at the rage of their half-drunken colleague. At the same moment the pale face of Magister Laurenzano appeared. He gracefully extended his slender white hand to his brother, and bowing pleasantly to the red-

nosed Neuser, the martyr of the evening, asked how he was.

"I'm well enough," replied the corpulent pastor spitefully, "and hope the reverend father is the same."

Paul took no notice of the allusion, but sat down between the Inspector and his brother. He must have overheard part of the conversation, for turning to Sylvan with a smile he said: "Your colleagues give me to understand almost every evening that they dislike to see foreigners here and want neither Calvinists, Lutherans, nor Papists in their country. But whom do they really like? A man must apparently be a native of Heidelberg and drink plenty of beer and wine or he can never be a good pastor in their eyes."

The stately Inspector shook his head. "I'm not a native of the Palatinate, but no one has yet told me I stood in his way."

The Jesuit looked at him closely. "You are a Bavarian, sir."

"No, I am from the Tyrol, and was formerly a Papist and a very zealous one too."

"May we know what stifled this zeal?" asked Paul curiously.

"Why not?" said Sylvan. "It is not a pleasant story, but it may be instructive and can do me no harm, as it happened so long ago. I am a native of Trent and was educated at Innsbruck by the Abbott Altherr. When I had been ordained I was sent as chaplain to the neighborhood of Salzburg, where an old priest was beginning to find the duties of his parish too onerous. So I left the seminary and entered the world, my head full of plans for improving and converting mankind. The old priest was not glad to see me. He lived with his

housekeeper and went to Salzburg every noon to drink the nice Strohwein* at St. Peter's. This suited me exactly; I could attend to the parish alone. I carried my wisdom up hill and down and preached the gospel to the peasants till I saw that they were making fun of me and liked the pastor best who gave them the least trouble. Deeply offended, I determined that if the peasants wouldn't listen to me I would remain at home in the old priest's library and astonish the world by writing a big book. Whether its subject would be archangels or tithes was to be determined by the volumes I found there. But Heaven only knows what writings of the Fathers I discovered in His Reverence's library. Amadis de Gaul, and the satires of Erasmus and Hutten, the works of Boccaccio and Sannazaro, Poggio's epigrams and Rabelais' romances. I now perceived why my pastor needed so much Strohwein to stupefy him. The love stories I read did me a great deal of mischief, too, but I soon threw them aside; fired with zeal, I determined to remove this scandal. One day when the priest was away and the housekeeper had gone to visit her nephews and nieces, I packed up the whole library of Antichrist, carried it out into the court-yard, piled the volumes in regular layers, and rejoiced to see how cheerily they burned. But, in my eagerness, I had not remembered that the Föhn** was blowing. How could a young saint of twenty have recollected such a trifle, when God's cause was at stake? The blazing paper whirled about the court-yard and before I knew it the shingles on the pig-sty were burning. I ran for water,

* Wine made from grapes carefully dried in straw to preserve all their sweetness.

** A damp south wind that sometimes prevails in Switzerland.

threw manure on the burning sty and, while panting and perspiring, suddenly perceived that the flying bits of paper had set the straw roof of the parsonage ablaze. I now rushed into the church and began to ring an alarm. The people flocked to the spot. I would not be questioned, wished to see nothing, hear nothing. Amidst the ringing I felt the church itself fill with smoke, saw the beams supporting the roof take fire, and rang louder and louder till the bell fell at my feet. Then I went out of doors. Holy Florian! When I looked around the whole village was in flames. The Föhn carried the blazing straw from roof to roof. I did not wait for the peasants to pay me the just reward for my piety, but ran away as fast as my legs would carry me. When night came I lay down in a wheat-field and fell asleep. Thus I returned to my abbot at Innsbruck and confessed everything. 'You have been zealous but indiscreet,' he said, 'you must stay in the Tyrol no longer.' So I was obliged to go down from my mountains and turn towards one of the sixteen quarters from which the wind blows over the Munich plains. I was now compelled to cringe and fawn, and soon had entirely forgotten to eagerly uproot other people's sins. When I at last went to Franken,* my zeal had vanished. Bishop Zobel of Würzburg thought I was a straightforward Tyrolese and knew how to conduct myself, so he made me canon and court chaplain. If there was no Strohwein there, at least we had Steinwein. I found my Therese and we lived together regardless of God's wishes. But at last I thought it was a poor business and asked if they could use me in the Palatinate, for my Therese was constantly urging me to marry her, and

* A region near the Rhine, formerly called by this name.

I wanted to have my children with me. So I came to Ladenburg. Instead of the heavy Steinwein, I drank Lützelsachsener. It isn't very palatable at first, but one soon gets used to it, and it is wholesome. In short, Inspector Sylvan is better satisfied than the canon at Würzburg ever was. This is my story, young man, and I think you can profit by it."

"Thanks, sir," said Paul smiling, "you may rest assured that I shall not set fire to Heidelberg. It does not require my aid to kindle the fire that burns there every four weeks."

"Make room for Chancellor Probus and Councillor Erastus," said Neuzer officiously as Erastus entered with a stout, but stately gentleman, who leaning on his sword, sat down at the pastors' table. The number of visitors increased and the court-jester's daughter, a blooming little maiden, cheerfully helped him to serve the guests. But she did not seem to see Magister Laurenzano, who sat unattended till the tavern-keeper himself brought him a tankard.

"Who is the rough-looking man with the huge forehead?" asked the artist. "I mean the one who swallows one mug of wine after another, and whose words are always hailed with such shouts of applause by his neighbors."

"That's our great philologist Xylander."

"Hm," muttered Felix, "our great humanists appear differently. And the thin gentleman yonder, who acts as condescendingly as if he were afraid of unexpectedly crushing us poor creatures with his lions' paws?"

"Hush," whispered Paul. "That's the famous Pithopöus, the great Aristotelian of Deventer."

"Well, I can do without him," replied Felix with the utmost calmness.

"The gentlemen must now prepare themselves for a very trying ordeal," Chancellor Probus now began in his full voice. "The introduction of the Genevese church discipline is as good as settled. Presbyteries are to be established which in connection with the clergymen will exercise the right of excommunication. To attend to other people's business will now be remunerative employment. 'The office of the elders,' say Calvin's ordinances, 'consists in taking note of the lives of others.' The quarters of the city are to be divided among the elders, who will inspect the houses and ascertain whether fathers and mothers know the new catechism, whether the family live peacefully, whether the father drinks, or the wife quarrels with her neighbors, whether everybody goes to church and communion, whether there are dice or cards in the house, or whether the daughters dance? The pastors must see that the things censured are abolished. The maintenance of public order in general passes from the magistrates to the ecclesiastical authorities."

"That will cost a great deal of trouble, as the sparrow said when it was ordered to lay a goose egg," cried a shrill, but hoarse voice.

The Chancellor frowned. "Aha, Klaus is falling back into his rôle of jester again," said the Inspector apologetically.

"He isn't far wrong. Children and fools speak the truth," remarked Erastus, rubbing his aching withered arm with his yellow leather glove. "The preachers will not be strong enough to maintain public order. The magistrates will still be compelled to act, but under the

orders of the theologians. But if Magistrate Hartmann Hartmanni can establish order under Olevianus' commands, I don't see why he should not have been able to do so before. For one thing is certain, this dissolute life in Heidelberg ought not to be tolerated any longer,—the noise in the streets till far into the night, the everlasting shooting and playing and gadding about. But the magistrate might stop all this without the preachers, if he were not himself a petticoat-hunter and a miserable fellow in other respects, to say nothing of fancying himself a great humanist and writing verses when he ought to be in his office."

"Yes, discipline is much needed in Heidelberg," Probus assented, "the neglect is now being avenged."

The clergymen said nothing but sat gazing with a somewhat perplexed expression into vacancy.

After an interval of silence so profound that one might hear a pin drop, the lean philosopher Pithopöus helped the gentlemen to express their thoughts by saying scornfully: "We shall probably no longer see the parsons at the Stag, for if the theologians are to wean their parishoners from tavern-lounging, they themselves must first set a good example."

"There goes all the advantage of the early service, Herr Neuser, with its delightful time of freedom after eight o'clock," added Xylander, his brown eyes twinkling mischievously.

"If Olevianus' proposals are carried into execution, you will be spared this anxiety too, Herr Professor. The taverns will be closed and in their stead we shall have 'abbeys,' where the unmarried citizens will be allowed to assemble during the evening hours under the

direction of Olevianus, Ursinus, or Zanchi. No food or drink will be given to any one until he has said 'Grace,' or, as the Gospel expresses it, 'prayed at the corners'. The number of glasses will be fixed by a decree of the presbytery."

A general outburst of indignation followed this incredible statement.

"The Herr Chancellor is jesting," said Pastor Suter with a look of utter bewilderment.

"Why, haven't you read the Geneva Ordinances prescribing what the Genevese may and may not eat?" replied Probus. "Hasn't Calvin forbidden dried Southern fruits to the Genevese, has he not prohibited the oppressed people from feasting on pastry, roasted game or poultry? Has he not declared that no Genevese would be permitted to invite more than ten persons to his house? Has he not ordered that no one shall wear velvet, silk, or red clothes, though Geneva owns the largest dyeing establishments and velvet manufactories? If the presbytery is to see that Hans doesn't tie his Grete's bouquet with costly ribbons or gold thread as the Genevese ordinances literally command, why should it not cast its paternal eye on the number of glasses Pastor Neuser drinks every evening? If the thirsty gentleman goes beyond the allowed limit, he must ask forgiveness of the parish on his knees in the church."

"Then we'll drink an extra tankard to-day," cried Pastor Suter in his sharp voice, "here, Klaus! . . ."

"I was in Geneva," Pastor Willing now began with a diplomatic smile, his bright eyes twinkling slyly at the Chancellor. "I know by experience what is going on there. Flogging and the pillory is the punishment given

a man who lives too well. But it is not safe to live too abstemiously either. During my residence there a peasant was imprisoned because he ate no meat on Fridays, for Calvin scented papistry in the fact. A bereaved widow was summoned before the consistory because she had said: '*Requiescat in pace*' by her husband's grave. Flogging young women whose arrangement of the hair or style of dress did not please Herr Calvin may be understood, but he also imprisoned the dressmaker who made the gown and the friend who helped in the toilette. It will be a fine state of things in Heidelberg when the consumptive dough-faces which Ursinus and Zanchi have gathered round them put their noses into every pot. I remember distinctly how in Geneva they made me repeat the catechism like a schoolboy, inspected my books, sent old gentlemen and respectable ladies to the head of the hospital to learn to pray, and instructed us in the children's catechism for a year that we might have correct ideas of predestination."

An uneasy pause showed the impression made by the pastor's story.

"Sunday walks too," he continued, "festivals in the open air, bowls, dancing, and singing must be put out of the heads of the merry inhabitants of the Palatinate, for all these things lead to excommunication, and excommunication means imprisonment and exile."

"The foreigners need not exile me," said Neuser angrily, "I'll go of my own accord."

"Where?" asked Xylander. "To the Huguenots? There you would have to rise still earlier, they hold their first service at sunrise. To the Saxons? Remember their poor beer and the dogma of omnipresence. To the

Hanseatic cities? There with Hesshusen and Westphal you would get out of the frying-pan into the fire. You could more easily throw thirteen with two dice than find a Church which will respect your liberty. It's no use, Brother, you must submit."

"I know of a place, and the Inspector and my friend Suter know it too. We shall soon have followers if the foreigners here go on in this way. We will emigrate."

"Klaus will probably be one of your party," said Xylander laughing.

"Klaus will turn Turk," retorted the waiter. "In that country a man has one God and three wives. That's better than the opposite way."

"Hush, blasphemer," replied Probus.

"It is a question whether it is not better to be a Turk than an inhabitant of the Palatinate under Olebianus and the godly Frederick," muttered Neuser.

"Stout Neuser is a man who would trade three patriarchs and twelve apostles for a cask of Deidesheimer," jeered Xylander, "but remember, you wouldn't get a drop of wine in Turkey, the Prophet had a weak stomach."

Probus rose, the conversation was becoming too frivolous, and he had attained his purpose of exciting indignation against the consistory. Erastus and the two professors also retired after a short time, and finally Pastor Willing left.

The two brothers now sat alone among the clergymen, who were evidently waiting for them to go. Nay, Sylvan at last asked the artist if he did not intend to bear the Magister company to the convent this beautiful moonlight night; but Paul seemed determined to sit

the others out. He ordered Klaus to bring him another glass of wine, and Felix, glad to enjoy his brother's society longer, willingly joined him. The Inspector rose and moved away from Paul and Felix to the other side of the table, where Suter, Neuser, and a third pastor, whom they called Vehe, eagerly gathered around him. Compared with the bloated Neuser, the porpoise-like Suter, and the coarse Vehe, whose face consisted principally of lower jaw, Sylvan's tall figure looked very distinguished, almost like Orpheus among the beasts. While Paul was telling his brother about the condition of his work, the Inspector produced several letters and said to the others in an undertone: "I have been to Speyer. Herr Caspar Beckhess, the Chancellor of the Voyvode, received me very kindly. He will be very glad to have mature and experienced theologians enter the service of the Transylvanian Church. But he thinks that his Unitarians are somewhat suspicious that the migrating Germans might give them the same trouble the Italians, Belgians, and French have caused the inhabitants of the Palatinate. Therefore we must roundly and distinctly abjure the doctrine of the Trinity, or Superintendent Davidis will not consent to our admission."

"Abjure the doctrine of the Trinity," said Vehe. "That's a strong measure."

"That depends upon the custom of the country," replied Sylvan reflectively. "After all, what do we know about these things? The three persons of the Deity are like the three persons in grammar. Here we conjugate: *sum, es, est*, there they conjugate: *sum, sus, sut*, which may be right too."

"But suppose the matter should get noised abroad before we have taken leave of the elector," squeaked

Suter in his falsetto voice, "then will the 'thick tower' surely be our lodging."

"I thought you would be afraid," replied Sylvan laughing, "so I'll pluck the chestnuts out of the fire for you. I have already written a paper against the doctrine of the Trinity, which I will send to the Voyvode's physician, Blandrata; I will add that your opinions are the same as mine, and I hope this will satisfy Davidis. Here is the document."

Vehe took the proffered sheets and read: "'Against the idolatrous worship of the Trinity and the dual nature of the Godhead.' That is very strong language," he said, glancing suspiciously at the Italian with his wolfish eyes.

"The stronger the better," replied Sylvan. "The Voyvode's ambassador and our friends in Transylvania must be convinced that we are in earnest about going over to them, or we shall get no desirable posts. I am going away from here because they have pushed me aside and set these North German and French starvelings over me. A poor living in Transylvania won't suit me. It would be better to stay in Ladenburg; don't you think so, too, Neuser?"

Neuser raised his soggy head. "Another superintendent who requires a confession!" he exclaimed. "Is the whole world full of these vermin, so that one can't even be permitted to live in Klausenburg as one chooses. Klaus is right, better Turks than superintendents! Deuce take Davidis and Blandrata, I'll go to the Turks; I'll write a petition to Sultan Selim this very day. I'll have rest from these leeches at last. Shall I leave the Palatinate to be tormented again in Klausenburg."

"Don't scream so," said Sylvan. "The Jesuit yonder pretends to be talking eagerly with his brother, but I see how he pricks up his ears. I knew his species in Würzburg."

"Klaus," Pastor Vehe's harsh voice shouted, "why do donkeys have such long ears?"

"Because their mothers don't put hoods on them when they are little."

"A bad guess."

"So that they can hear the preaching in the street, when the pastor won't let them into the church."

"That's better," said Vehe with a malicious glance at the Italian. — "So that they can listen."

"Away, away with this rabble," cried Neuser. "One has no rest. Watching, spying, sniffing, informing, they count the very drops of wine in a man's tankard. I *will* have liberty."

"We are in the way here," said Felix to his brother, who apparently unmindful of the conversation on the other side of the table had not averted his eyes from the artist's lips, but kept his ears strained all the more eagerly to catch the preachers' words.

"Let them go first," replied Paul in Italian, "it will attract less notice." In fact the four clergymen rose at that moment and noisily left the room without any farewell to the two brothers.

"German courtesy," said Paul laughing.

"They are brutes," replied the artist. "If I could saw off the façade of the new palace and send it to Florence I should consider it a good work," and after washing away the unpleasant impression with a last sip of water, he took his brother's arm and went out into the market-place, where the dark outlines of the church

opposite stood out in strong relief in the bright moonlight. Felix turned towards the castle, Paul towards the bridge. The young priest did not see the metallic brilliancy with which the river glittered in the moonbeams, nor the magical play of the shifting clouds of mist, his mind was wholly absorbed in the blasphemies he had heard, the plans of the profligate pastors who wished to strengthen the army of those who denied the Holy Trinity. He thought it by no means improbable that all the influential and important men who had gathered around the round table this evening, were secret allies of the Arians. But he mentally vowed to crush this whole nest of Satan at *one* blow. Even if he had been capable of a feeling of pity where God's cause was at stake, it would have been powerless against the Neapolitan's thirst for revenge—the vulgar insults of these rude men had been received with external indifference, but his heart glowed with a fierce longing to repay them. His wrath was especially directed against handsome, haughty Sylvanus, on whom the Catholic Church had bestowed her highest honors, and who to-day had frankly owned the principle of the beast—always to go where the pasturage is richest. As soon as Paolo had reached his little room he prepared to write a detailed report of this memorable evening in the secret characters the superior had assigned to him. “Until now,” said the young Jesuit, “I have only killed the little foxes and wild swine that ravaged the Lord's vineyard, but to-day a stately stag with eighteen antlers has received the arrow in its heart.” He lay down to rest with a feeling of triumph, intending early next morning to send his letter from the city to Speyer.

CHAPTER IX.

THE sun was setting, and yet Felix stood on the topmost boards of his scaffolding examining the cornice of the roof and the chinks in the wall which seemed to need repairs. He had heard at the dinner table that Erastus' little daughter had returned, and who knows whether this very news had not reminded him of the most dangerous portion of his task. At least, while looking at pilasters and consoles and noting the condition of the figures, more than once on his airy height the memory of the fair-haired maiden by the convent pond rose before his mind. Standing on a narrow plank two hundred feet above the ground, he gazed intently into the face of the grave Serapis, then passed his hand over his eyes and reminded himself that this was not the place for dreaming, and muttering with an angry shake of the head: "If I should make a mis-step to-day and perish like Phaeton, no one will be to blame except golden-haired Clytia, for whoever has once seen her sweet smile will bear the remembrance of the dimples in her cheeks up here among the planetary gods. These old fellows understand such things too." At that very moment, just as he was preparing to descend, he saw the golden-haired girl of whom he was thinking, standing before him at the nearest window.

Clytia had really come back from the convent to her father's house and turned up her dainty little nose not a little when she saw the scaffolding in front of the windows

and the dust in the rooms. Spite of the painful associations connected with her last days in the convent, she felt very lonely. It had been harder than she expected to say farewell to the kind old abbess, and her anger against her schoolmates had entirely vanished from her good childish heart since she had taken leave of them amid jests and kisses. She now sat at her lofty window gazing dreamily through the masons' scaffolding over the Ruprechtsbau to the valley of the Rhine. The Neckar wound like a silver ribbon through the wide plains whose fields were already white for the coming harvest, the blue mountains of the Haardt gleamed in the distance, the flowering acacias exhaled their fragrance on the slopes of the Jettenbühl, and on the right and left, upon the heights of the Heiligenberg and Gaisberg, the blossoms of the chestnut trees were sprinkled like a white powder over the dark-green woods. The houses of the city clustered around the Heiligengeistkirche like sheep around their shepherd, and the two towers of the bridge standing on the nearer and farther sides of the river, hospitably invited the inhabitants to pass to and fro. It was the same pleasant scene that had so often delighted her in former days, but she herself had changed; her happy heart remained in the convent and her eyes rested dreamily on the tower as if through that gate all her happiness was passing in or out — she knew not which. As she now took her sewing and seated herself in the window alcove she felt what she had lost. "If my mother were only alive," she murmured, and a tear hung on her long lashes. She could not confide the grief that oppressed her to her grave father, dearly as she loved him. She had been shamefully deceived. The man whom she had idolized as the

best on earth had shown himself an angel of darkness in the garb of the good shepherd, and the insult he had offered her deeply offended her womanly dignity. What did it avail that she had *bonam conscientiam*, as the good abbess used to say? It still seemed as if she herself had committed some wrong by permitting a hypocrite to obtain so much power over her, and when she remembered the fateful moment of the evening *exercitia* in the chapel the hot blood crimsoned her face, and she bent low over her work while indignation and shame were struggling for the mastery. While thus absorbed in grave thoughts and reflections, she was suddenly startled by the shadow of a man who passed along the scaffolding close by the window. She was so accustomed to live here in the deepest solitude, except for a sparrow occasionally flying past her window, or a cooing dove alighting on the parapet, that she started in alarm. The head of the person outside rose above the window so that she could only see the figure as far as the shoulders. At sight of this apparition a man would have thought, how shall I protect my house from such visitors; a woman would have feared the poor young fellow might fall from the narrow plank. Lydia was still too much of a child for this, and as soon as her first alarm was over was curious to look at the head to which these young feet belonged. Suddenly a suspicion darted through her mind. She fancied she had seen these very feet walking over the green convent meadows and trampling on blue flowers. Lydia hastily started up to close the window; but Felix had already recognized her: "Ah! have you returned home, Jungfrau?" he asked cordially. "I greet you on this airy height."

"You will fall," replied Clytia anxiously; "please finish your business, you make me giddy."

"Oh! I feel as much at ease here as a titmouse swinging on a fir cone. What splendid air! Allow me to sit down." And he leaned comfortably against a beam, clasping his hands around one leg while the other dangled carelessly in space.

"Will you have to work long in this dangerous place?" asked Clytia, who in her anxiety would almost have besought him to get into her window.

"Tolerably long," replied the architect laughing. "I must mend Serapis' boot, Jupiter's eagle will lose its tail if I don't spread some mortar over it, Cupid is in danger of losing his head, for which you are probably in fault, Faith and Hope are still in tolerably good repair, but Charity has no nose, and Samson must be supplied with a new jaw-bone of an ass. You see you couldn't live in your castle without me."

"How can you jest in such danger?"

"By the Madonna's eyes! I'm not joking at all. Would you like a headless Cupid or a noseless Charity?"

"I want nothing to do with either," replied Clytia, "but that I may not be the means of keeping you in your dangerous position, permit me to shut the window."

"No, that I won't allow, since you ask my permission. Give me instead an honest dismissal, by telling me when the evening service in the castle-chapel begins. I should like to hear my brother preach for once, since he has grown so taciturn here among you."

"Magister Laurenzano preach?" asked Clytia, greatly startled, and the color faded from her cheeks.

"Yes," replied Felix with a faint smile, "Do you know when?"

"The evening service begins at six o'clock," said Clytia hoarsely, "please go down," and with hasty, trembling hands she closed the window. Felix looked after her in surprise, then shaking his head absently made his way down. Clytia had hurried into a back chamber as if she fancied she would there be safer from her own thoughts. She cleared up the rooms and soon forgot where she had put the things, so that she was obliged to look for them again. Then, dissatisfied and troubled, she sat down to sew. The little chamber had grown warm for the rays of the setting sun were shining hotly upon it. Lydia opened the window. All was still outside and Felix had ordered the ladders to be taken away, so that she was safe from unbidden visitors. Her heart throbbed violently as she went on with her work. Never again did she wish to see the man, who, although bound by secret vows had sued for her love. Just at that moment the first of those who were going to the evening service came out of the castle-gates on their way to the castle-church. Women's friendly faces looked up at her to see if she was not going to join them as usual. Lydia pushed her chair farther back into the room. The bells began to ring. This was the only church music the elector had still retained, "for the present" as he said, while even the organ had fallen a sacrifice to the zeal for church purification. Clytia listened sadly to the sounds; she felt as if someone was being buried, whether she or he, she knew not. When the notes of the bells died away and the great castle court-yard became perfectly still a sudden tremor ran through her limbs, she gasped for breath, and felt

an irresistible longing to go out of doors.—She now heard singing and, as if in a dream, took her little hood and cloak and holding her prayer-book in her hand moved onward, drawn by some invisible power against her will to the church where the wicked priest was preaching, and slipped into the last row of seats by the door, where she might hope to remain concealed from his evil eyes. Had the magic of the bells lured her thither, did the psalms wield this spell, or had she followed him from whose gaze she now sought to hide behind the pillars? The minister entered the pulpit and read a prayer. When Felix a short time after glanced across at Clytia, she had moved her seat to one where she looked Magister Paolo directly in the face.

Felix himself gazed sullenly and absently around the lofty chapel. Was this the famous church of Heidelberg castle, once the richest in all the Rhenish countries? The high Gothic arches had been whitewashed, the paintings, which Felix's practised eye discovered here and there under the wash, pitilessly covered. A large spot at the entrance marked the place where the exquisite baptismal font had once stood, a similar one in the chancel that of the destroyed altar. Without the slightest regard to the architecture of the building the benches were arranged around a hollow square in the centre, where—a ridiculous object to Felix—was a very ordinary piece of furniture, the “table of honor.” Part of the congregation sat with their backs to the chancel which, bereft of altar and crucifix, seemed purposeless and empty as an unused corner. The painted figures of the saints on the windows were replaced with common glass through which

Felix gazed wrathfully at the blue sky, asking himself what had probably become of the famous paintings on glass to whose restoration Masters had devoted a portion of their lives? The old Heidelberg school of singers, that had formerly possessed an institution of its own at the foot of the castle hill, had also gone. The people shrieked in chorus, as seemed edifying to each individually. When the singing was over the young preacher read a short text in a soft, melodious voice, and with a graceful movement laid the book aside, passed his delicate white hand over his pale lips, and began his discourse. His musical, silvery voice filled the church, at times like the monotonous, melancholy murmur of a fountain, at others rising to the majestic roll of thunder, yet even amidst the loudest roar of the rhetorical hurricane the tones suddenly resumed a soft, tender cadence that doubly touched the heart. But this homiletic din passed over Felix without making the slightest impression. He was scanning the plan of the edifice, imagining how very different it must have looked when dimly lighted by the painted windows of the chancel, pervaded with the odor of incense, enlarged by the shadows of dark side-chapels and the dusk of deep niches. Gradually he controlled his indignation so far as to be able to fix his attention on the words of the preacher, who moved about his platform with the ease of a trained orator and the grace natural to an Italian. "Alas, how foul is earth when I look up to Heaven," he heard him sigh in the words of St. Ignatius. He depicted in vivid hues the baseness of this earthly existence, the perils of life, the desolation of the unprotected human heart. There was a world of wretchedness in his melancholy voice. "Nowhere can we find support and comfort ;

not in ourselves, for the heart is an obstinate, malicious, unreliable thing; not in others, for they are like unto us; not in the world at large, for it belongs not to Good, but to Evil. Where then is there a refuge, deliverance, firm ground on which we may stand?" A pause heightened expectation and gave his hearers' oppressed hearts time to realize their own anxiety. Then the orator, with a wave of the hand to point out the blessing so near them, added: "Behold the Church, your mother, your teacher, your protector and comforter in every grief."

Felix angrily glanced aside. "This is very transparent," he said to himself. Again he scanned the congregation. The few men present were not at all devout, the children were restless, but the women hung all the more intently on the young preacher's lips. When Felix next listened, Paolo was describing the punishments of the other world. "'The tortures of the damned shall last for eternity,' the Scripture says. How long is an eternity?" he asked, fixing his eyes upon the congregation as steadily as if he expected a definite answer. "Suppose yonder vast, lofty mountain looking towards the east, were made of hard steel and that once in every thousand years a little bird should fly to the steel mountain, peck it with its tiny beak, and then fly off again? How many thousand years would it be before the mountain was entirely pecked away? Or suppose a great lake rolled its waves from these hills to the Haardtgebirge yonder and that every thousand years a tiny gnat should come and sip water enough to quench its thirst, how many thousand years do you think the little creature would require to drink the lake dry? But when the bird had pecked away the mountain and the gnat had

drunk up the lake, it would not yet be even the *millionth* part of an eternity, and the Scripture says: 'they shall be tortured to all eternity.'"

"The tricks of the mountebank!" muttered a voice in Felix's heart and for the first time he felt a secret aversion for his brother, for whom he had usually had only the most tender, friendly, and paternal feelings. He looked up indignantly as the tall, youthful figure, sinking on its knees almost vanished within the pulpit, then started up with outstretched arms, sank backward as if struck to the heart by a mortal blow, and once more asseverated with upraised hand: "Only the Church, the Precept, and the Word."

So now, after banishing the organ, the pictures, the colored windows, and the choir of trained singers, they are compelled to praise extravagantly the wholesomeness of the wares nobody desires to taste, while the heart voluntarily attracts men to the Church as we adorn it. As the preacher with thorough knowledge of the art of oratory closed with a homiletic storm in which he displayed to the utmost the full power of his voice, Felix waited impatiently for his Amen and when after the singing the congregation left the church without the customary music of the organ, amid the hurried tramping and clattering of the school-children and the loud talking of the men, the Italian felt utterly cold and unmoved, a mood in which he had never before left a Vesper service.

When he passed through the door of the chapel into the court-yard of the castle now glowing in the light of the setting sun, his glance instantly fell upon the tall figure of the Councillor Erastus who was waiting for his daughter. He intended to pass with a courteous

greeting, but Erastus stopping him, asked pleasantly how the purified service of God had pleased the Papist.

"Monotonous tunes, badly sung," replied the Italian evasively. He felt no vocation to preach the gospel to the heathen.

But the Councillor was in his element. "Ah," said he, "you don't know our musical canon. We believe in Calvin's rule in this respect. 'Care must be taken,' says the Genevese teacher, 'that the ear does not pay more heed to the melody than the soul to the meaning of the words. Songs that are merely intended to produce a pleasant impression and charm the ear, are not suited to the majesty of the Church and must be displeasing to God.'"

"On the contrary," the Italian answered drily, if Our Lord possesses even the slightest musical ear, He will exclude these people from the heavenly choirs on account of their inharmonious shrieking. *That* singing is only fit for Hell."

Erastus laughed. "And the Magister's sermon? Did it, too, find no favor in your sensitive ears?"

"If the edifice had been left as our forefathers built it," said Felix angrily, "no great oratorical art would have been required to lead souls to God."

"We are accustomed to be edified by the Word, not by pictures, symbols, and all sorts of sing-song," replied Erastus smiling.

"By the Word?" cried Felix wrathfully. "Do you believe that God's word is not His word when it is sung? Can it be a question whether the meaning of the Word is unfolded to me more clearly and impressed more deeply by Palestrina or by Pastors Neuser, Suter, and whatever may be the names of the rest of the

worthy men I lately saw gathered around the great table in the Stag? Perhaps, too, you have seen at San Marco in Florence Fra Angelico's picture representing the two disciples inviting the Master to stay with them, for evening is approaching and the day is far spent. You may listen to many sermons from your famous members of the Consistory upon the disciples, ere you obtain even an idea of the text Fiesole places so impressively before your mind. Whoever has seen the look of the Saviour in that painting will never forget it, it will linger in his memory like a good text from the Scriptures."

"I, too, have spent many a happy hour in the churches of your home," replied Erastus. "But I have noticed how good pictures as well as bad are honored by the people as idols and deprive the only true God of the worship that is His due. I know the painting in San Marco well and, as you say, no one who has seen the mild features of the Master and His disciples will ever forget them. But I have also seen other pictures which I shall be still less likely to forget. For instance, the horrible Sebastian, Roche and Mark, in the hospital at Venice. If hospital fever broke out in consequence of filthy surroundings, instead of fighting it with fresh air, clean water, and unslaked lime as we do, more candles were lighted before the three Saintly Patrons. If people still continued to die the Patron Saints were scolded, spit upon, and beaten—and that was the end of it. Nobody thought of common-sense, practical remedies. That is the consequence of mixing art and religion. That's the reason I did not stir a finger when all the pictures here were removed, though I grieved for many a work of art."

The Italian probably saw the kernel of truth contained in these words but shrank from their implied heresy as if Satan's claws had seized him. He hastily made the sign of the cross and, when Erastus smiled sarcastically, angrily resumed the argument.

"The rabble will always be the same," he said rudely. "Since they can no longer seek aid from pictures they have become all the more devoted to witches and sorcerers, which is no gain to the worship of God. You cannot be unaware that Calvin has burned more sorcerers and witches in the little city of Geneva than have been burned in all Italy during our lifetime. Better for the people to invoke pictures of the Madonna than to seek aid of the devil. But in abolishing candles and choirs you have not even the apology of misuse, or did the organ serve the cause of superstition too?"

"We don't go to church to look at candles and listen to music, but to think of Our Lord's Passion."

"Sir," replied the artist in a voice trembling with emotion, "I was in the Pope's Chapel at Rome at the Easter festival, when on the day before the Saviour's death we were reminded, in our way, to think of the Lord's Passion. The chapel was dark and on the altar stood candles corresponding in number to the years of the Saviour's life. The choir gave expression to the feeling that overpowers the soul while reflecting upon the tremendous crime committed by mankind against Christ. This was no sing-song, it seemed as if earth and heaven were filled with the sound of universal weeping over the sins and crimes of the world, and we wept too. Nor did the lighted candles charm us. One after another was extinguished by an invisible hand until the

last, which was carried behind the altar. The church was veiled in darkness, only the mighty forms in Michael Angelo's Last Judgment were dimly visible at the end of the building. But this gradual extinguishing of the lights touched us far more deeply than any sermon could have done. I trembled, passionately raised my hand to shield the Saviour's last glimmering spark of life, and when even this vanished then was made clear to us the passage of Scripture: 'The light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not.' Christ's pure and beautiful life had faded before our eyes. Believe me, I felt our Lord's Passion on that day far more deeply than if I had been in one of your purified churches and a red-faced man, standing in the pulpit, had spoken with a voice roughened by drink of an agony beyond his comprehension."

"If the preacher is irreligious, the cause must suffer everywhere," said Erastus.

"If, if!" cried Felix vehemently, "true religion has always been a rare thing on earth, and does not your Chancellor Ursinus himself say that he knows of scarcely six Christian pastors in the whole Palatinate?"

"What does Ursinus know about our pastors? For years he has sat gloomily at his study table, and seen nothing of the world except the path from the Institute to the Library in the tower used by our clergy."

"Well, what I have seen of them does not indicate that these gentlemen are qualified to supplant Michael Angelo, Raphael, and Palestrina."

"Yet, in spite of these Masters, we have far surpassed you in true culture," replied Erastus calmly.

"In true culture!" Felix indignantly exclaimed. "Look at this building. It is an example of the way in

which *our* Masters strove to promote the civilization of your nation; then came the great Heretic of Wittenberg, the malignant demon sent by Satan himself to corrupt you, and what have you accomplished since? Catechisms, confessions, polemic treatises, books about everything people cannot want to know — your whole lives spent in quarrelling, arguing, disputing, and fruitless gossip. If you go farther in this path, you will no longer see such structures as the late Ottheinrich's palace, but only universal bloodshed, hatred, and endless discord."

"You have only spent a few months in Germany, young man," answered Erastus. "Do you think yourself qualified to pronounce a final judgment upon our people? Look into our schools, where the children are growing up catechism in hand; they know the words of Holy Writ, and learn to read, write, and repeat the ten commandments. Look into the houses of our citizens. When we have once succeeded in placing in each the Bible translated by Martin Luther, so that every one can read God's Word at any hour, there will be no farther need of your sensual allurements. Perhaps you will consider this method rude and plain.

"We do not light candles to the Holy Mother of God to secure our children's recovery from sickness — but rather consult a physician. We do not go halves with images of the saints in theft and robbery because we are guided by God's will, which we seek to know by frequent study of his holy Word and not through pictures, candles, and music which appeal only to the senses and have no effect on the heart of the good or the wicked — leaving the former still yearning after the beautiful and the latter lusting after murder and theft."

The quiet man was already beginning to get excited, when Lydia fortunately appeared. She looked flushed and her eyes glittered with a feverish light as she silently listened to the conversation, but she heard the artist with her eyes rather than her ears.

"How much he resembles him," she thought.

"And what do you say, Jungfrau?" Felix now asked courteously.

"That one should not exclude the other. God's Word will endure forever and when the people are thoroughly conversant with it they will perhaps be allowed to have pictures, lights, and organs again."

"A true woman's verdict," laughed Felix, "or shall I rather say: a judgment of Solomon?"

"No, Sir Artist. The wise Solomon was a man, so he said the matter must be settled either one way or the other and ordered the child cut in two; the Queen of Sheba would have said: 'You shall both have the baby,' and everybody would have been satisfied."

"See how clever the girls of the Palatinate are," replied Erastus smiling and holding out his hand to Felix to bid him farewell. Clytia was greatly delighted that she had found so good an answer and, singing joyously, bounded up the steps leading to the portal of the castle.

CHAPTER X.

MAGISTER PAOLO had seen his charming pupil at the evening service and though the practised orator had shown no sign of weakness as he made his pulpit

rhetoric flow on in its accustomed channels, his thoughts, from the moment he discovered her, were by no means intently fixed upon the everlasting torments of hell he was describing. It was certainly improper that while speaking of the little bird pecking the steel mountain, he was thinking: "So she has forgiven me," and while his hearers were calculating the thousands of years, he was saying to himself: "She will not escape me." When after the sermon he stood in the lofty chapter-room adjoining the chapel and saw through the windows the lovely girl in the court-yard engaged in eager conversation with her father and his brother, he would fain have approached them, but the days of bitter humiliation through which he had passed still exerted their influence upon him and he went through the hall of the castle to the path leading to the convent.

The *primus omnium* of the Venetian college had felt deeply humbled under the cold gaze of the Countess Palatine of Neuburg, experiencing the same mortification that he had undergone at the Jesuit school when convicted of a grave offence against the rules of the Latin grammar. Whilst engaged in teaching the children he often made an angry gesture, stamped his foot, or bit his lips till they bled. His excitable, passionate Neapolitan temperament was strikingly apparent. People saw him in the woods talking hurriedly to himself and angrily breaking the branches from the bushes with his cane, and the children were once greatly amused at seeing Magister Laurenzano, sitting on a bench by the convent pond, excitedly box his own ears, repeating again and again: "*pazzo, pazzo!*" But he had only been a fool, not a villain, he said to himself, and when at the Stag he made the great discovery of the

pastors' abominable heresy his dogmatic indignation against the blasphemers of God helped him forget his own little moral delinquency. The thought of the shameful Arian conspiracy completely absorbed his mind for several days. He had as he supposed parted forever from Lydia but the thoughtless child again put herself in his path. He walked sadly down the mountain, often lingering as if he wished to be overtaken, often stopping to consider whether he would go back and seek Lydia in her own home. When he had at last determined what to do and resolutely set out on his way home, he chanced to meet at the gate of the bridge the very persons he intended to avoid. Erastus had some patients in the next village to visit, and his daughter was accompanying him. The physician cordially greeted Paul, while Lydia with drooping head walked before them, listening attentively. When her father was accosted by one of his patients the two young people were obliged to join each other, but the eloquent Italian lacked words to-day. His color varied from red to pale, and he almost gasped for breath. To break the painful silence Lydia praised the clearness of the river that flowed beside them.

"Since I have lodged in the convent the Neckar has become a friend," Paul replied, "a friend into whose mood I daily enquire. When in times of sleeplessness I hear his ceaseless plaint all through the night and see him in the dull morning looking black and gloomy with the mountain towering above him like a heavy shadow, I feel as if I must comfort him. But on other days his rushing waters have a very joyous sound, and he looks at me with a thousand sparkling eyes and changeful merry lights, like a smiling boy.

In winter he often seethes with fervent passion and smokes like boiling water, because he is warmer than the cold earth. To-day he looks transparent and pure, like a youth with a good conscience, but I have seen him in a very different mood," Paolo continued lowering his trembling voice, "turbid with tempests and thunderstorms, and red with shame for the woe he had wrought."

While speaking he tried to look at the young girl, but instantly lowered his eyes. His first words had roused Lydia's sympathy, but the direct confession of his sin confused her. "How unhappy he must be," she thought, "to confess to me," and her whole compassionate soul gleamed in the large innocent eyes as she gazed tenderly at him. Her father's approach put an end to farther explanations, and the three parted, Erastus and his daughter going to Neuenheim, Paul to the convent.

Lydia's kind heart grew lighter now that the first dreaded meeting with her old teacher was over and the disagreeable remembrance buried in quiet conversation. Mechanically, as if unable to help it, she held out her hand to take leave of the young priest, whose embarrassment troubled her. Paul now knew that he should find the punctual physician daily at this hour on the way to visit his patients, and henceforth it often happened that their paths crossed. Erastus liked to talk about Italy and Paolo understood the art of narration; the scene rose distinctly before the eyes when he described his home — the dull red glow over Vesuvius or the waves of the canal that washed the marble steps of Venice. But he was no less familiar with the agreeable art of listening respectfully to the older man, and when Lydia saw how

much her father was pleased with him, she, too, soon fell under the spell of his personality as unconsciously as before. Her hope returned. Even if the good abbess was right and he had been a zealous Papist, why should he not shake off these secret bonds and, as a free man, ask her hand of her father, who would not refuse it! Such things happened daily, was she less worthy to have a man make this sacrifice for her sake than other women? As Paul now daily sought her society and offered her his homage in her father's presence, she again believed his wooing was seriously meant. The love that believeth and hopeth all things persuaded her that he had resolved to cast the old life aside and become hers, and she gave herself up with happy confidence to this new faith.

One evening he had again joined them and, when her father entered the house of one of his patients, Lydia for the first time was once more alone with the Magister. He instantly took her hand, asking: "Have you forgiven me, Lydia?" She was again overpowered by the feeling she always had in his presence, a shrinking of the heart, a paralysis of her own will, and a vague dread lest she should be forced to do as he desired against her own volition — a state of blissful torture. Paul put his arm around her, kissing her again and again. There was no explanation, no entreaty, no words, nothing but kisses, ardent kisses—and Lydia tremblingly submitting. Yet her heart did not feel the joy that had filled her breast the first time in the church. Then he had drawn her gently towards him as if he were an angel of God, to-day he seized her hastily as if he were committing a sin, and his eyes roved restlessly to and fro to see that they were alone. When he heard Eras-

tus coming he sprang hastily into a field where he tore up some plants and put their blossoms in the lining of his hat, while even at this distance he cleverly engaged the returning physician in a conversation about his patient, ere he could overtake his agitated child. Lydia soon recovered her self-command. Every instinct of maidenly pride rebelled against this treatment. Paul's kisses burned like spots of fire on her glowing face, and when they passed a farm-house before which a spring poured deliciously pure water through two pipes she felt as if she must go to it and wash away the sullying touch. Angry and ashamed she walked on in advance, pondering how she could compel him to confess his real intentions. Almost immediately an incident occurred which showed her in only too clear a light the gulf on whose edge she was walking. A cloud of dust rose on the highway leading to Ladenburg, and as it came nearer the three pedestrians distinguished several horsemen escorting a cart which contained two prisoners. Erastus, troubled by the sight, tried to move aside, but one of the prisoners, a tall man, rose and called to the physician: "Friend, plead our cause with the elector. We were not in earnest, we did not mean to emigrate." Puzzled by the familiar sound of the voice Erastus stared at the dusty, excited man, and recognized with horror Inspector Sylvan, whose guest he had often been in Ladenburg.

"There stands the traitor!" cried the other prisoner, Deacon Vehe, with furious gestures, "he listened to us at the Stag."

An icy smile flitted over Paul's pallid, waxen features.

"Beware of him!" shouted Sylvan, "and warn

Neuser." With these words the sorrowful party passed on, for the mounted men whipped up the cart-horses to prevent any farther conversation. Erastus gazed in great perplexity at Laurenzano's cold, stern face, and Lydia burst into tears. It had instantly become evident to her that the Magister was still pursuing the same devious ways, and as he had hurled these men, her father's friends, into ruin, so likewise was she already his victim. Her fancy at once pictured him in the cowl, from which his unearthly eyes glowed fiercely upon her as her own had frightened her in the "Mirror of Memory."

"Of what did you accuse those two men?" Erastus sternly asked the Italian.

"I don't know what the good folk mean," replied Laurenzano, shrugging his shoulders contemptuously. "They were at the Stag a short time ago, rummaging over all sorts of papers and whispering together, while my brother Felix was telling me about his journey; then they suddenly rose, looked angrily at us and went away without any form of leave-taking. If they had forbidden secrets, there was no necessity to discuss them at a tavern table."

Erastus gazed silently at the young Italian, but Paul, with a slight shade of reproach in his tone, calmly continued: "I only went to these evening assemblages because you cautioned me not to hold aloof from the clergy of the country. After to-day's experience, I shall renounce this pleasure for the future."

"Pardon me," replied Erastus, ashamed of his suspicion, and he held out his hand to Paul, "then the matter will be explained. And you have no idea to what the papers referred?"

"I heard the names of Transylvania and the Voyvode repeated several times, but the secrets of these rude men did not seem to me worth listening to."

Erastus shook his head thoughtfully. "They wanted to emigrate, so said Sylvan . . . To Transylvania, that is to the Unitarians, Sylvan's old whim! This may be a very bad business," and he became absorbed in his own thoughts.

Lydia was not so easily appeased as her father. Her woman's instinct instantly told her that Paul was guilty. The prisoners' reproaches harmonized only too well with what she herself knew of the disguised priest, his intrigues for papistry, his secret masses and *Exercitia*, and no less plainly agreed with what the abbess had said to her. It was evident that he had not changed any, the heartless monk had merely been insolently trifling with her once more. Angrily repelling every advance from Paul, she walked rapidly onward, and the Magister himself was glad that their paths separated at the bridge.

When the father and daughter entered the city, they found the utmost excitement prevailing. "They wanted to make Turks of us!" exclaimed an old woman who was coming down the steps of the Heiligengeist kirche. "They were going to betray the country to the Sultan! The Church Councillor has just announced it himself from the pulpit."

"Don't talk nonsense, Quadin," cried a sturdy citizen. "Pastor Neuser was an honorable man and, spite of his red nose, I like him far better than all the pale-faced Italians who never rested till they had ruined him."

"What is the report about Pastor Neuser, Sulzer?" Erastus asked the speaker.

"Don't you know, Herr Rath," cried another bystander, interrupting Neuser's advocate: "The Magistrate Hartmann Hartmanni was to have arrested him by order of the elector, but he sat so long in the gaming-house making pretty speeches to all the waitresses, that the black-bird got off. Neuser's wife told a lie, saying he had just gone out, but on searching the house they found burnt papers and a knapsack ready packed; he must have taken all his money with him, not even a groschen was discovered. He left his wife and children behind, and horsemen are searching every road to capture him."

"The Church Councillor says he wanted to betray the country to the Turks!" the old woman again exclaimed.

"Pastor Neuser?" replied Erastus laughing, "you can rest easy on that score, my good woman. If the Turkish Sultan wants to begin a war he'll need no Heidelberg Pastor's assistance."

Shaking his head, he walked on, but met another group at the next corner.

"They've arrested Pastor Suter and Pastor Velve too," cried a hoarse voice, which Erastus instantly recognized as that of Klaus, the waiter at the Golden Stag. "All the children of the Palatinate must give way to the Belgian dogs."

"Sylvan and Neuser are not natives of the Palatinate," said another voice.

"But they loved our Palatinate and stood by us against the Frenchmen, Netherlanders, and Italians, who want to lord it over us."

"Let us burn Olevianus' house," shouted some one in the crowd.

"And Zanchi's," screamed another.

"And that of the court-chaplain, Dathen," added Klaus.

"Calm yourselves, men," Erastus now interposed. "Say nothing that you might repent of if it should reach the ears of the magistrate." The shouters were already looking behind them in alarm. "Go home and serve your guests, Klaus," Erastus added kindly. "No one has heard you, but don't try to make matters worse."

The crowd in the market-place was visibly increasing. Men were pouring out of every house and the hum of voices sounded like the buzzing of a bee-hive. Erastus saw two of the most embittered old nuns of the Neuburg convent whispering to the people that all the tyranny was solely due to the Calvinist Church Council. "Just come out on St. John's Day," he heard Sister Anastasia—a wrinkled old woman as yellow as a quince—say, "then you shall have a little dance in the mill, and we'll see whether the Calvinists will dare forbid our people a rational amusement."

In a side street the host of the Stag was telling a group of staring youngsters that Olevianus was going to abolish all the taverns; Pastor Willing, a crafty ecclesiastic, was working his way through the throng, smiling pleasantly as he dropped here and there a word against the professors. At the corner of the gable-house, opposite the church, Erastus saw Werner the Baptist, who from a high flight of steps was looking down with Socratical irony on the surrounding tumult. Xylander, too, his merry brown eyes sparkling with amusement at the uproar, brushed against him in the crowd.

"Why are the people shrieking so?" asked Erastus.

"Ah, if they only knew! But the shrieking itself is

the great purpose of life to them." The lank philosopher Pithopöus, towering a head above the rest of the populace, was moving through the press to his usual Tusculum. He apparently did not consider it worth while to ask the cause of the uproar. What cared he why the ants were swarming? He only said to himself: "People would have been more endurable, had the Deity had somewhat restricted the quantity." As the great man reached the Stag, Pastor Willing whispered to him: "Philosopher! The insurrection is here, let us give it a purpose." The Aristotelian, indignant at such familiarity began to frown, but ere he had finished contracting his brow the nimble pastor had already climbed the front steps of the tavern-keeper's house and by signs and gestures requested silence. "The city preacher wants to speak," was shouted on all sides. "Hush, hush! Silence for Pastor Willing!"

"My dear countrymen! Natives of the Palatinate! Citizens of Heidelberg!" began the pastor in stentorian tones, his intelligent face assuming a humorous expression as he incessantly rubbed his hands, a habit customary with him in the pulpit.

"He is washing his hands in innocence," said the Baptist Werner to his neighbors.

"I have only requested your attention, dear friends," cried the pastor, "to beg you to go quietly home again." A burst of jeering laughter followed these evidently ironical words. "Remember," he continued, "that it is Saturday, and that Herr Olevianus desires to study his sermon and, if you make such an uproar he cannot possibly prepare himself and you know that a Professor must always learn by heart in advance that which he is going to speak in public." There was an-

other peal of scornful laughter. "So you see that you must be quiet, dear children. You know that Herr Olevianus is a great man, and that no one in the whole country should even breathe without his consent." A storm of abuse resounded on all sides. "Then remember that another ecclesiastical gentleman also lives close by, Pastor Zanchus...."

"Zanchius," corrected the great Aristotelian in the tone of a pedagogue.

"Well, I mean the little man who always begins by screeching and then weeps in the pulpit; I can't remember all those Italian names, but he is now taking his noon-day nap, so that he can watch better at night to find out who gets drunk. Keep very, very quiet or he'll wake up and begin to weep. You know what the new church-discipline commands?"

"No, we know nothing about it, we want no church discipline!" screamed a medley of voices.

"Well," cried the pastor, drawing a small volume from his pocket, "here is the thirteenth paragraph: 'We also desire that the strolling about the streets at night, which has hitherto often led to disorder, disturbances of the peace, and a riotous life, shall henceforth be abolished.' So, if you don't want to be fined thirty kreuzers a man, you must go to bed at sunset as soon as Herr Garnix's chickens go to roost."

"Marnix!" cried the philosopher angrily.

"Quite right, Marnix! but who can possibly remember all these foreign names? Instead Herr Olevianus allows you something quite different," continued Willing, waving his paper aloft. "Whoever is well enough to do so must go to church twice on Sunday, and whoever on Sundays or holidays is seen outside

the gates, or in the taverns or on the playgrounds, will be flogged. So nobody must go to Wolfsbrunnen or the Bergheim Mill on Sunday or Meister Ulrich will be after him with his broom." Shouts of rage echoed on all sides. "Keep quiet, my dear brethren, or you will certainly disturb Herr Datterich."

"Dathen," corrected the tireless Aristotelian.

"No, I really meant Herr Tremellius, but I get the countless foreign names confounded and the worst of it is that we must now give our own children uncouth names, because Herr Olevianus desires it."

"How so, what do you mean?"

"Yes, fellow-citizens, you must all re-christen your children. Nobody must be called Alexander or Julius, because they are Pagan names, nor Barbara and Ursula because they are Catholic, nor even Franciscus and Katharine; there will be no more Käthchens and Bienchens, nothing but Sara, Rebecca, Mardocheus, Abraham, Gideon, Melchisedec, Zerubabel, Zacharias. People will be allowed to have only Bible names given to them in baptism and the dragoon must call his sweetheart Abigail, and Bienchen her dragoon Habakkuk. So have the great church councillors Olesinus and . . . what are their names?"

"Olevianus and Ursinus," cried the corrector.

"Yes, Olivianus and Urschelinus decreed."

"It seems to me this unruly man is making game of us," said the great Pithopöus, and casting a withering glance at Willing he entered the tavern. But the pastor continued: "You can no longer marry as you choose either. Herr Lupinus and Citronianus have commanded that no man over sixty will be permitted to wed a woman under thirty years of age."

"But suppose the man is elector?" cried a voice in the crowd, and a general laugh followed. "Yes, my lad," said Willing, "that's a very different affair, for that are we Frederick the Pious. Moreover President Beileger. . . ."

"His name is Zuleger. . . ."

"Well, Zuleger, or Hinleger, or Ableger or whatever you choose to call him, will look, I say, into the elector's pots too. The table at the palace will no longer be kept up as it has been hitherto. Hear what the Bohemian dealer in mouse-traps orders on page 98. 'We desire also that, within our jurisdiction, the great banquets given in the kingdom and elsewhere, which have hitherto often caused wastefulness and led to immoderate gluttony, shall henceforth be abolished. So there will be no more money spent at the palace, and foreign guests will stay away, too, if they are compelled to let the consistory fix the number of 'costumes' they may be permitted to wear. Money, profits, pleasure will come to an end, there is to be nothing in Heidelberg except the catechism and sermons.'" A yell of fury echoed on all sides. "Shooting for prizes, processions, plays, dancing, bowls, dice, cards, all are forbidden, nothing is allowed but psalms, psalms, psalms." The murmurs grew more sullen and threatening. Here and there broken panes already crashed. "So I exhort you, dear friends, to go quietly home. The Calvinists do not jest. Only the trivial religious offences are punished by fines and imprisonment, for others the sentence is breaking on the wheel, burning, beheading. Above all, send the children home. Surely you know that Calvin ordered girls of nine and boys of twelve to be executed that good order and the fear of God might be main-

tained in the city. When I was in Geneva in '45, thirty-four people were beheaded between February and May because they would not recognize Calvin as their master and refused the doctrine of his Church; among those beheaded was the executioner's own mother."

At these words the noise partially subsided and several street urchins felt in their pockets and quietly let the stock of pebbles with which they had supplied themselves drop on the ground. At the same moment the throng in the eastern part of the market-place began to move. The blare of trumpets rang out from the grain market. "I repeat," cried Willing in a still louder voice, "whoever is an obedient subject of His Highness, the Elector, will instantly go home and keep the peace. The consistory will attend to everything. And now I call you all to witness that I only spoke to exhort you to keep the peace and go quietly home, and have not uttered a syllable about releasing the prisoners." With these words he left his place and disappeared in the entry of the tavern, where Xylander laughingly greeted him. His hearers followed his example and dispersed. At the same instant the trampling of horses' hoofs was heard in the distance, and a company of infantry appeared on the road from the castle, marching rapidly down to the city. The throngs in the other squares began to scatter also, at first reluctantly, muttering and lingering, then gradually faster and faster till when the soldiers appeared they found the market-place empty as a blown egg; only laughing faces looked from the windows as the horses' tails vanished round the corner of the Heiligengeist kirche into the main street.

Erastus had sought refuge from the surging throng

in the gable-house opposite the church, and determined to leave Lydia in the care of his French friend Belier until he had made farther enquiries. Monsieur Belier was one of the fugitive Huguenots, who with the remnants of their property had soon established new business in the towns where they settled, and by dint of untiring industry had won prosperity. The master of the house, a tall aristocratic-looking man whose close-shaven head and pointed beard recalled Henry of Bearn, and his plump little wife received the popular physician with evident pleasure. "Can you tell me what all this means, Herr Rath? Three pastors arrested, another a fugitive, the people infuriated against foreigners, soldiers in every street, and houses searched here and there," cried the vivacious Frenchman, while his wife tenderly drew Erastus' daughter down on the window-sill beside her.

"Look at the crowd, dear child," said she. "Did you ever see such an excitement in Heidelberg?"

"I expected to get information from you, Herr Belier," replied Erastus. "Let us go across to the Stag, they will know there."

"I visit no tap-rooms," said Belier waving his hand in courteous refusal.

"Well then, I'll take the sin on my own shoulders," Erastus answered smiling. "Take care of my child, I'll be back soon."

While Herr Belier accompanied his guest downstairs and then went to his workrooms, Lydia remained at the window with the lively Frenchwoman. The young girl was very sad, and would gladly have been alone to obtain relief in tears. All this woe had been

wrought by the gloomy man, who sought to ruin her too, yet against whom she still felt powerless.

"Who has caused all this trouble?" sighed little Frau Belier.

"Laurenzano," shrieked a shrill voice, "*flou Laurenzano!*"

Lydia turned pale and glanced around in terror. Frau Belier laughed. "Hush, Polly," she called to a bird which the young girl now noticed for the first time: "You frighten people." Lydia clung timidly to Frau Belier's arm.

"There's witchcraft in it," she said trembling. "The creature is right. Oh, how frightened I am!"

"Be sensible, child, our architect's name is Laurenzano, and as he comes here daily about the new building my husband is erecting, the parrot has caught the name."

"No, no," said Clytia trembling, "it learned it from Satan."

"But, I assure you, it calls the name twenty times a day. It's always proudest of its last bit of learning. What should the innocent architect have to do with this matter? Or were you thinking of the pastor?"

Lydia made no reply but sat gazing sadly into vacancy. The Frenchwoman's curiosity,—or, as she called it, her maternal sympathy,—was roused. "Why do you think ill of Magister Laurenzano?" she asked, fixing her pleasant brown eyes steadily on her young companion.

"He has treated me badly," murmured Lydia, and it seemed as if the places on her face where Laurenzano had kissed her an hour before, were burning. The words had escaped the lips of the excited girl almost

involuntarily, but reticence was no longer possible. The vivacious woman talked and questioned till Clytia made a full confession. If she hesitated, the indiscreet Frenchwoman supplied any addition she fancied. "He probably whispered the hour for meeting, followed you, etc.," till the poor child, to prevent the affair from seeming worse than it really was, told her whole secret.

Sprightly Frau Belier stamped her foot angrily. "He's an abominable wolf in sheep's clothing, a betrayer, a disguised Papist, a spy, perhaps a Jesuit."

"*Filou, filou !*"* screamed the parrot.

"But you'll say nothing about it to my father," pleaded Lydia.

"I betray you, *foi de Bayard !* I, a Frenchwoman, tell women's secrets to men? What do you think of me? But you must put yourself under my charge, little rogue," she continued kindly. "We'll get the better of the black-coat. Come down and see me again to-morrow, and we'll consult farther." And she kissed Lydia on the cheeks and forehead with so much energy that the girl began to laugh amid her tears.

When Erastus, accompanied by the master of the house, returned he looked grave and troubled. He told the ladies that the elector had suddenly sent from Speyer orders to arrest the pastor of Feudenheim, the deacon of Lautern, and the inspector of Ladenburg, and to seize their papers. Neuser had been saved from the same fate through being warned in time by a student whom the prisoners on their way had addressed in Latin. They had also shouted from their cart to the Pastor of Neuenheim: "tell Neuser of this." The latter could not be far away, for he had scarcely left his

house when the Magistrate Hartmann Hartmanni appeared. A horrible article against the doctrine of the Holy Trinity had been found among Sylvan's papers. Hartmanni had caught Neuser's wife in the act of burning her husband's manuscripts; but the brave woman had vainly sacrificed herself, for hidden among the books was found a strange, blasphemous letter addressed to the Turkish Sultan, in which Selim II. was invited to unite with a large party in Germany for the destruction of the anti-Christian doctrine of the Trinity and the introduction of the Koran's pure dogma of one God. Neuser must have been drunk or crazy when he wrote this absurd paper: nay he had written on the other side *potest omitti*, "not to be sent." But not despatching it was the greatest misfortune, for now it was among the documents and, if produced, he would surely be sentenced to the harshest punishment. "How diligently the hostile party will turn the scandal to account is shown by the preachers' already informing their congregations of Neuser's letter at the evening service," added Erastus sighing. "Dozens of copies have been scattered through the city. Probus lent me his. Here is the abominable rubbish!" and he gave Belier a paper he carried in his belt.

The Huguenot approached the low, round-paned window and amid half-suppressed exclamations of indignation, read the contents of the paper. "This is surely open treason," he cried. "Just listen, Fanchon, what the worthless fellow writes to the Sultan. "Therefore, if Your Majesty desires to bring the idolatrous Christians to acknowledge the one God, if Your Highness wishes to enlarge your empire, and diffuse the worship of the one true God throughout the world,

now is the time, whilst the Christian priests and preachers are quarrelling and the common people are beginning to waver in their faith. The Bishops and Authorities oppress the poor so heavily that they openly long for Your Majesty's arrival, so that you may seize the German empire and deliver the populace."

"The wretch!" exclaimed Frau Belier, while Erastus with a troubled face, paced up and down the room. "Worse yet," continued Belier. "He offers the Sultan verbal counsel. 'Whatever else it may be necessary to know concerning the Christians' condition will, by the grace of God, be orally reported to Your Majesty.' This merits the axe," said the Frenchman, folding the paper and handing it to Erastus. "I cannot conceal from you, my friend," he excitedly exclaimed, "that I judge such blasphemies of God's name as harshly as Calvin himself. To punish theft, murder, and extortion by death, and to allow insults to the Divinity to pass unresented because they do not injure men but only the honor of God, would be unfair and impious. The civil laws must guard God's honor as inviolably as man's. A pastor who sets the koran of Satan above the Word of God must be exiled from the community."

Erastus shrugged his shoulders. "Yet it is sad that the delirious fancies of a drunkard must be punished with the wheel and the gallows. The man has a good wife, too, and a family of children. But other innocent people will suffer through him. Ursinus' baccalaureates and licentiates are fairly jumping for joy. This scandal comes just at the right time for them. They have already circulated the watchword that all opponents of the Geneva Interdict and the Presbyterian police are to be looked upon as allies of the Arians." He then

added that both Xylander and himself had been openly shunned at the Stag. His best friends anxiously asked if it were true that they had both had frequent conferences with Sylvan at Ladenburg. Olevianus and his adherents plainly intended to profit as much as possible out of the feeling against himself, Xylander and Probus. Thus Ursinus had told the students, and Olevianus the congregation, that the men arrested were only the "soldiers of Satan," the "generals" would soon be found. "Religious peace had scarcely been restored," sighed Erastus, "and now we are again plunged into unholy warfare."

"No one who knows you," replied Belier cordially, "will believe your enemies' accusation that you have made common cause with the blasphemers. I don't approve of your opposition to the Church discipline. A Church without discipline, in my eyes, is no Church at all and no body of Christ. But I know you only fight against man's thirst for power, not against the purifying and educating of the parish."

Erastus held out his hand. "Thanks, my noble friend," he feelingly answered. "In Geneva and Scotland, where there was no evangelical ruler, the theologians have deserved gratitude for undertaking the maintenance of order. Here there is no such necessity. We have no Mary Stuart, no Guises to fight, but are happy in possessing a Christian, evangelical magistracy. Besides, Olevianus and Ursinus do not wish to guide the populace, standing in their midst like the great prophets of France and Scotland but wish to play at being Calvin and Knox in their studies—and that won't work. They are foreigners in our country and have not a hundred men behind them."

"It may be so," replied Belier evasively. "But, come what may, the man whose skill and faithfulness saved my wife's life will always find this house open to him, though we may perhaps have different opinions about the public welfare." The two men parted after cordially shaking hands.

CHAPTER XI.

DARK days for Erastus followed Sylvan's arrest. The report of a great Unitarian conspiracy was industriously circulated by the adherents of church rule, who threatened the lives and reputation of their antagonists. Sunday after Sunday Olevianus thundered denunciations from the pulpit of Peterskirche against the blasphemers who trampled the honor of God under foot and against the jurists and magistrates whose arrogance would not yield to the Church her proper dues. These harangues were aimed principally at Erastus and Xylander, vengeance being taken on Lydia's father because, to strengthen his party against Olevianus, he had become too intimate with the double-faced Inspector at Ladenburg. True, the suspicious conferences at the parsonage were very simply explained by Xylander's liking for Sylvan's good wine, and the latter had wisely kept back papers which could only injure him in Erastus' opinion; but no one would believe this interpretation. Meantime the elector still clung faithfully to his counsellor, but the latter well knew how zealously his foes were laboring on all sides to injure him in the dull-witted sovereign's favor. Oppressed by such anxieties, the physician could

pay little heed to his child. Lydia sat alone, dreaming over her work. She was perfectly right—she needed a mother's care. Sometimes she went to the Huguenot's house and always received a cordial welcome from Frau Belier. The good lady was glad to occasionally hear something different from the rigid doctrines of her Calvinistic husband, but the loquacity with which she expressed her solicitude and love oppressed the quiet, thoughtful girl, who moreover had a perfect horror of the pet bird whose shrill voice constantly shrieked the name which comprised all her joy and sorrow—and then shaking its feathers joyously, wound up with '*filou*' (scamp).

Sometimes she met Felix there, who entertained her by his jests, complimented her beauty, and offered to be her *cavalier servente*. She accepted his attentions, occasionally venturing to cast a side glance at the stately artist, and thinking how much handsomer and more dignified was the grave Magister. But she did not repeat her confessions to Frau Belier. Expressing her sorrow had proved a poor way to stifle it. Her foolish heart had found in the vivacious Frenchwoman's remarks the first standpoint from which to view her relation to the Magister on every side, and the more harshly the little lady treated Paolo the more the girl's kind heart sought to defend the object of her violent attack. How could she, who believed in the contrition of the wasps she helped out of her father's wine-glass and the gratitude of the sparrows with whom she shared her breakfast, give up her handsome, talented teacher as wholly lost? After all, what sin had the young preacher really committed? Kissed her? She ought not to have allowed it, and the imprisoned pastors' accusation that

he had betrayed them was not yet proved. The truth was that her foolish heart had been ill at ease ever since she had felt the Neapolitan's fiery kisses. It seemed as if some irresistible power were drawing her towards the convent. One noon when her father had gone to one of the endless meetings of the consistory, from which he always returned so irritated, the thought of her long delay in visiting the kind abbess weighed heavily on her conscience. She knew what had deterred her from fulfilling this duty, though she daily reminded herself that it was high time to do so. Even now she felt troubled, as if she were doing wrong, when she took her veil and hung on her kerchief-bag. Sometimes loitering, sometimes quickening her pace, she passed along the road by the river, constantly dreading to meet the only person in the wide world whom she feared. If she had been compelled to cross a dense wood behind whose every tree a robber lurked, her heart could not have been more troubled. Panting for breath, she climbed the last steep portion of the way, and when she reached the convent gate and asked for the abbess, her heart throbbed so violently and her voice was so low and faint that the portress thought Lydia was bringing some sorrowful news and shook her head as she showed her to the Countess Palatine's rooms. This was the hardest part of the walk for Lydia, who was compelled to cross the large court-yard directly under the Magister's windows. The wicked man could not harm her here, but perhaps he might see her. She felt as if she were crossing the butts behind the castle, where one was never safe from being struck in the face by a bolt from some crossbow, and experienced a sense of security when she at last stood in the shadow of the narrow cor-

ridor and knocked timidly at the kind abbess' door. The old Countess Palatine tenderly embraced her, affectionately reproaching her for delaying her visit so long, while all the other pupils who lived much farther away had already been to see her. Then she asked whether her father was really the friend and advocate of those abominable imprisoned pastors, and passed on to eager explanations of the injury done the Palatinate by the perpetual changes in religious affairs. She did not mention the Magister, and after giving Clytia a cup of milk dismissed her with a maternal kiss. The young girl, once more light-hearted and happy, darted across the courtyard to the gate, where she gave the portress messages of remembrance to the other inmates of the convent and then walked rapidly down the hill.

Just where the path led into the high-road she saw an ugly peasant boy with fiery red hair and a crafty face who stood holding something in his hand,— apparently waiting for her. Before she could speak to him, he called: "you lost this," threw a little package at her feet, and ran swiftly across the fields to the vineyards. Lydia, much perplexed, picked up the parcel. It was a silk handkerchief which she had never seen before. As she unfolded it a note dropped out. "Dear Jungfrau! Be on the Holtermann to-morrow an hour before sunset. I have a great deal to tell you. Your father's happiness depends upon it." The lines were signed "L." Lydia angrily crushed the sheet. Was she the kind of girl to be asked to a meeting in the gloaming, at the loneliest cross-road in the whole neighborhood? She wrathfully crumpled the letter and thrust it with the handkerchief into her bag. "An hour before sunset! Abominable! On the Holtermann—

two hours' walk from my father's house! It is unprecedented," and with flushed cheeks she hurried on across the bridge and through the city, till the steep ascent to the castle checked her swift pace.

The Magister had been in the strangest possible mood on the evening when he parted from Erastus and Lydia. He triumphed in the fact that the lovely girl had unresistingly allowed him to clasp her in his arms, his blood seethed hotly in his veins when he recalled the blissful moment, yet he was ashamed of his own weakness and disturbed by the signs of indignation Lydia had finally shown. He was also troubled by the prisoners' denouncing him as their betrayer. The arrow shot from a secure hiding place had only pleased him so long as the bleeding game was out of sight. Now that he had beheld the poor fettered criminals on their way to a terrible punishment, the excited zeal which had led him to believe it his duty to avenge the honor of God suddenly vanished. He might as a public accuser have caused their condemnation at any moment, but the thought that he had sent the fatal dart from an ambush, that he was a slayer, concealed and ever to remain so, troubled his conscience. The secret denunciation instead of relieving his soul had burdened it. He was impressed, too, by the fact that he everywhere heard censure of the accusation, never a word of approval. In his own eyes he now seemed a criminal who must hide himself, for if ever a corner of the veil that covered his deeds should be lifted, his whole false position would inevitably be disclosed, and he began to wonder how many people already knew his secrets. Everywhere on the highways he heard discussions of the arrests, and fancied those he met greeted

him less cordially than usual or intentionally looked aside. Half-forgotten insinuations made by the pastors at the Stag, and chance allusions to his papistry now began to trouble him,—for the first time his conscience was sensitive and ill at ease. Whatever precepts of his Order he repeated, his better self was no longer satisfied with the mechanical reference to a sworn duty, since he had seen with his own eyes the bloody fruits of his secret report.

“I ought never to have taken this part,” he murmured. “I am willing to serve the Order, but openly. I am no coward, why should I creep out of sight?” Heated by his rapid pace and the swift current of his thoughts, he tore the ruff from his neck and thrust it into his pocket as if the symbol of a minister of the Reformed Church pressed his throat like an iron collar.

He tossed restlessly in his sultry cell all that night while the seven deadly sins were fighting for his soul, and rose the next morning bewildered and confused, his eyes glittering with a feverish light. The school was closed, and no occupation diverted his attention from his agitating thoughts. The abbess, and probably all the nuns, had known the state of his mind since those fatal *Exercitia*. What should he preach to them? So he discharged his religious duties as mechanically as possible. His own self-respect threatened to desert him with the lost esteem of his parish. Work became loathsome, and he wandered idly through the woods around the convent, or walked up to the venerable Benedictine Abbey of Schöнау, from which after a short rest he returned solitary and sad through the old oaks to his little room in the convent. His sermons in the castle chapel became more and more gloomy, filled

with bitter accusations of the human heart and the sins of the world. His symbols were drawn solely from the darkest scenes of life. Women and girls often gazed with troubled faces at the melancholy preacher, who wanted to deprive them of all the sunshine in God's beautiful world. Lydia was no longer among them. The principal of the Institute said complacently to the councillor and city pastor seated beside him: "The Magister grows daily in perception." But there both theologians were mistaken. On the contrary, their protégé had never been so near moral ruin as now, when his views of the world and mankind were so bitter. Whoever has lost his self-respect possesses only half the power of resistance against Satan. Since the abbess had witnessed his weakness, since those who immediately surrounded him no longer esteemed him, and the parish regarded him with distrust, he approached nearer and nearer to the verge of the abyss. Everything was now a matter of perfect indifference to him. Why shouldn't he become like Sylvan, Neuser, and hundreds of others, who with all their sins enjoyed the approval of their fellow-citizens? He, too, had hot blood in his veins, his senses cried out for pleasure, happiness, love. He had drawn from Lydia's lips a sweet poison that seethed in his veins. Day and night the full, soft lips, the warm embrace gave him no rest. The Neapolitan's heart throbbed wildly under the pedantic disguise of a German Magister. When evening came he rushed to the city, where he was coldly and distantly received at the Stag. To do as others did, he hastily swallowed one goblet of wine after another and then left the tavern earlier than usual to wander in a troubled mood through the streets. His

excited imagination played him a thousand tricks; he fancied every girlish figure was Lydia. Sometimes he thought all women were wooing him with their eyes; that everyone who moved out of his path was trying to lure him down a side street. Then clenching his teeth, while the blood throbbed wildly in his temples, he rushed forward till with heart beating madly he reached his room in the convent. As the imprisoned stag tears up the earth with its antlers and cries savagely for the forest, the man's nature in Laurenzano, bound by a hundred fetters, longed for deliverance from the ecclesiastical yoke, and when with fierce, gloomy looks he left his cell, the pious nuns shrank timidly aside, and even Sabina herself sometimes doubted whether all the regulations of the old Church were as salutary as she had formerly believed.

Such was Paolo's mood on the day when sitting at the window of his cell, he saw Lydia enter the courtyard and instantly felt assured that she had come to seek him. The timid deer he would fain have spared was forcing itself within reach of his weapons. He must see her, speak to her, kiss her . . . Hastily seizing his hat he rushed outside the walls. But how could he talk to the young girl on the highway, under the eyes of the inmates of the convent who were already coupling their names in gossip. He stood irresolute, the ardor of the man waging an ignoble battle with the cowardice of the priest. Workmen were loosening the soil in the convent vineyards; children were carrying bundles of faggots down from the forest. Evidently no meeting was possible here; if Lydia wished to see him — and of course she had come for that purpose — it must be in some lonely spot. In his haste he could

think of none except the notorious cross-road, so universally avoided by the peasantry. It ran above the convent along the crest of the Heiligenberg and Dachsbau. There they would be safe. What cared the faithless priest that the innocent child's reputation would be imperilled if she were seen in this notorious spot, provided he could reach it from his cell unobserved? So in a few hasty lines he appointed a meeting there, wrapped the note in a silk handkerchief, and beckoned to a red-haired boy who was standing idly by the side of the road.

"Do you see the young girl coming through that gate? She has lost this handkerchief but I don't want her to know who found it. Give it to her without mentioning me, and then run away at once. Do exactly as I tell you, and when you come back I'll give you a copper."

The lad scratched his red head and grinned, then, taking the handkerchief ran across the meadow, while Paul walked hurriedly in the direction of the vineyards. When the boy returned, Laurenzano paid him and went back to his cell in a very contented mood, sure that he had fulfilled Lydia's own wishes. The fact that the young girl had accepted the message proved that she meant to keep the tryst. "*Volenti non fit injuria*," he murmured. True, in his priestly cunning he had added the remark about her father. That was not right, nay, it was Satanic. But he comforted himself by thinking "I was obliged to help her out of her embarrassment, give her some excuse in her own eyes and mine for obeying the impulse of her heart." The choice of the place also pleased him. He could reach it unseen by a lonely forest path. Not a living soul dared go

there after dusk, and his fancy painted in glowing hues the delight of this one hour of dual solitude. In his priestly selfishness he had no thought of the peril to Lydia's fair fame were she seen; it was a matter of course that his own honor, the reputation of a priest, of the Order, of the Church, must be saved, and this was the easiest place for him within reach. He had already sunk so low that at this moment he remembered without indignation Pigavetta's explanation of the probable opinion of distinguished teachers that a monk might even kill the woman he loved, if thereby he could prevent the still greater misfortune of injuring the reputation of the monastery.

"I know she will come," he said to himself, "she cannot resist. How else could she be the bewitched maiden," and he laughed joyously. Then his eye fell on the Mirror of Memory, which the abbess had ordered to be carried back from the church to his room, and the image of venerable Father Aloysus rose before his mind, bringing troubled thoughts. It forced him, as if with invisible hands, to look through the round glass in this hour of temptation. Feverish, flushed with passionate emotion, his dull eyes surrounded by black rings, his lips half parted, his own face gazed at him from the monk's cowl. He beheld the image of a dissolute priest, against whom Father Aloysus had warned him in Speyer when he gave him this singular memento.

"My son," the good old man had said, "you are going out into the world in the guise of one who belongs to it, therefore look from time to time into this glass to see if the expression your soul finds in your features is suited to the garb you have vowed to wear?"

For a moment Paul shrank from his own image. But passion had stifled every better feeling; with an oath he pushed the mystic casket so violently that it fell. Glass and mirror lay before him in fragments. Hastily gathering them together, he thrust the shapeless bundle into a corner. The young priest felt as if he had been delivered from some evil genius, and humming a song he had lately heard lay down to rest. When our sinful resolves are fixed on one firm purpose they sometimes apparently supply for a moment the peace of a good conscience. Sure of success, the Magister for the first time in many weeks slept soundly and quietly; but when on the following morning he awoke fresh and bright, his conduct of the previous day appeared to him under a totally different aspect. The remnants of the broken casket gazed reproachfully at him. The Mirror of Memory never did better service than now when it lay in fragments. Troubled and oppressed, Paul began to prepare for the evening service, which unluckily he was obliged to conduct that day. If he had known how to reach Lydia he would have recalled his summons to the interview, and was now determined if it did take place, to remember in time the remorse that follows every sin, and on this occasion to part from the young girl forever.

CHAPTER XII.

WHEN Lydia wearied and excited by her visit to the convent returned to the castle, she found her father sitting sadly by the window, gazing mournfully at

the Valley of the Rhine, now gleaming in glowing hues under the last rays of the setting sun. "We shall not enjoy this view much longer, my child," he said, laying his thin, emaciated fingers on her soft, girlish hand. "My enemies are increasing in strength and who knows whether I may not some day be imprisoned in the thick tower opposite with Vehe and the Inspector."

Clytia turned pale. Could Paolo really desire an interview with her on her father's account? She was on the point of confessing everything to this kind father, being guided entirely by his advice and begging him to speak to the Magister. But suppose that should be the end, suppose her father should substitute for this sorrowful uncertainty a hopeless conclusion? She felt that she could bear this far less easily than all the misery of doubt. Erastus saw her turn pale, and added consolingly:

"Don't be anxious. I am in no immediate danger, only I cannot remain permanently in my present position, and many a man vents an old grudge upon the fallen counsellor of a Prince." After supper Erastus read one of Zwingli's sermons aloud, kissed Clytia on the forehead with a slight shade of solemnity, and went to his study where he paced restlessly up and down until far into the night. Clytia gazed anxiously after him. What did all this mean? Sorely troubled, oppressed by a sense of utter desolation, she sat down by the window and gazed at the sky, where one star after another appeared, as in a great city lamps are lighted, now here, now there. Hesperus was shining brightly above the last glow of sunset. "The star of love sinking in a sea of blood," she thought. The pointed roof of the thick tower and the dark masses of the Ruprechtsbau

and the chapel stood forth in gigantic outlines against the western sky. A tiny light glimmered here and there in the tower. Was the jovial Sylvan in whose garden she had spent many a pleasant afternoon, and whose merry children idolized her as their beautiful cousin from Heidelberg, reading by one of those wretched tapers or grieving about his dear ones? Whatever wicked things the poor man might have written, Clytia pitied him deeply and fervently added his name to her prayers. "What a terrible certainty of faith it requires," she thought, "to kill a man on account of his unbelief."

The young girl went to rest at a late hour, but obtained no sleep. She could not forget her father's remark that he, too, might soon be imprisoned in that horrible tower. Suppose Paul could really save him and she should cause the opportunity to be lost by not meeting him at the cross-road. Tortured by mental anxiety and secret suffering, she began to weep. The wind rattled the builders' scaffolding outside and more than once she started up in terror, fancying she heard the beams creak under a stealthy step and some one rap on her window. "If he should come here by the same way as his brother," murmured the frightened child, drawing the coverlet over her eyes. Even in her dreams she felt the dread gnawing at her heart. In her nightmare she fancied Paul had attacked her and was sucking her young blood, she saw him distinctly in the spectral cowl of the "Mirror of Memory," his eyes glowed from beneath the hood, then the head changed to a skull which tried to kiss her with its lipless mouth, till with a shriek she again started up in bed. At last she fell into a deep slumber and when late in the morning she awoke her father had already gone to visit his patients. At dinner

he was very silent, only saying "he was going away for a few days to hold a meeting with some friends on the other side of the Palatinate. One last effort must be made to free the elector from the hands of the fanatics." So Clytia was again left alone to wonder what the Magister had to tell her about her father's welfare. It became more and more evident that she would injure his interests if she refused to hear Paolo's tidings. And might not Paul have something to say for himself, too? Might he not at last seriously intend to begin a new life, if she only held out her hand to aid him? She told herself that she could not possibly go alone among the mountains to keep an appointment, but it seemed as if the diabolical priest had cast a spell around her soul, so strong was her longing to seek the spot to which he had summoned her.

At last she could resist no longer, and throwing on her veil hurried down the steep path from the castle to ask Frau Belier to go with her. Perhaps she might find the artist there, who could bid his brother tell her in Frau Belier's presence what he had to say. But when she reached the gable-house on the market-place Frau Belier had gone across the bridge to get some flowers at a gardener's. Perhaps Lydia might meet her on the way. The young girl went over the river and now made no farther effort to resist her fate. Opposite the bridge stood a chapel. How gladly Lydia would have knelt there and prayed for guidance, but the Calvinists had closed it, and any one who repeated a prayer here except during the public religious service, was in danger of being punished for idolatry. If she could have prayed here for a time, she would have committed her father's safety to God and returned

home, but the door was shut. So she remained oppressed by vague forebodings.

"I must save my father, and him too, yes him, him especially." She meant to tell Paul how wrong it was to seem what he was not, how happy he would feel if he ceased to pursue this false life. She fancied that there were many things she must say to him for his own sake. Behind the little church an unfrequented path led up through the vineyards into the woods; by following it, though the way was somewhat roundabout, she could reach unseen the place the Magister had appointed for their meeting. The bell of Heiligengeist-kirche was ringing for vespers when she reached a quiet meadow in the forest. The silent hill-side lay calmly amid the lofty beeches, and beyond it appeared the valley of the river whose silver-clear waves forced a passage through the blue mountains. As the notes of the bells died away in the distance, a prayer learned in her childhood returned to the young girl's mind. "Dear Christ, what means the chiming vesper-bell?" "Thy life's goal and thy years on earth to tell."

But she must hurry, the sun was already disappearing behind the mountains. The higher she ascended, the wider became the view of the hills and mountains of the Odenwald and the plains steeped in the golden light of the setting sun. Partridges rustled swiftly away to seek shelter in the woods from this unwonted disturbance of their haunts. The young pines stood like loving children in front of the lofty trunks of the ancient trees. Then Lydia came once more to wide clearings. It was lonely and silent under the tall oaks scattered over the mountain. Here and there a jay glided across her path, ever and anon she heard a woodpecker

tapping on the tree-trunks, a merry little squirrel leaped across the high-road which she had now reached, all the other living creatures in the woods had already gone to rest. Lydia shivered as the shadow of the Heiligenberg fell across her path. She ought to have dressed more warmly, but she had not intended to come here when she left the house. Fear, too, began to steal over her. A large grey bird glided out of the brush-wood behind her and flew on in front, uttering a low, wailing note. When she had passed, it again swept by with a swift, noiseless flight, alighting a few paces ahead of her. It seemed uncanny, for Lydia knew that the night-jar boded misfortune, but neither shouting nor shooing would drive her ghostly companion away. She would gladly have turned back, but she was now so near the end of her walk and so far away from the city, to which she preferred to return in Paul's company. When she stopped under an old beech-tree on the ridge between Heiligenberg and the so-called Dachsbau, she saw that the sun had set. The circuitous way she had chosen was longer than she had supposed. But it was all the more certain that Paul would be waiting there and the young girl earnestly longed for his protection as she advanced towards the spectral shadows of the oaks, while the western sky still glowed redly behind her. Passing along the crest of the mountain on the verge of the forest she met several wood-cutters going down to the next village—towards the mills whose clattering wheels could be heard afar in the evening stillness. The rustics gazed at the solitary pilgrim in astonishment, and Lydia, seeing them stop at some little distance to look back, quickened her pace to get out of sight amongst the bushes. At the edge of a lonely grove of firs

she at last found herself near the notorious Holtermann. The road from the valley of the Seven Mills and the Heidelberg highway here crossed the paths leading to the villages of the Odenwald. Many a traveller unacquainted with the region had lost his way here, many a rich miller from below in unsettled times had been relieved of his purse by lurking foot-pads, and children had seen in the gloomy copses kobolds, will o' the wisps, and wailing women, or heard malignant laughter. Why in the world had the heartless priest appointed a meeting in such a place? Lydia walked timidly forward in the twilight. The plain below now looked like a blue sea, through which the Rhine gleamed as a streak of fire, and the Neckar rolled its red waves like a wide river of blood. Dim, ghostly shadows rested on the cross-road. Everything was silent and lonely. No one greeted her. The young girl in her terror and disappointment was on the point of weeping, but while looking around for a dry spot where she could sit down, partly to rest, partly to wait a little longer, she suddenly perceived that she was not alone, and a startled cry escaped her lips. Under the gloomy fir-trees at the edge of the woods crouched an old woman drawn up into a ball, her face resting on her arms and knees as she gazed askance with her evil eyes at the young girl. Clytia in her fright was unable to move a limb; like a bird fascinated by the green eyes of a serpent she stood before the uncanny gaze of the old woman, whom she supposed to be one of the monstrous shapes that haunted the Holtermann. At last she heard a malicious chuckle.

“Oho, does the fair Lydia want to gather herbs and dig roots on the cross-road at sunset too? I didn't

know the doctor's little daughter practised witchcraft. Her father threatened me with severe punishment if I should ever do it again. I suppose your lover is faithless? Aha? Shall old Sibyl help you? I've brought back many a man, pretty maid, whom golden locks and blue eyes couldn't keep. Do you want to try your fortune with Mother Sibyl?"

"You are the herb-woman from the Kreuzgrund, I know you now," replied Lydia. "Let me sit down by you. I have lost my way in the woods and should like to rest."

"Lost your way on this road," said the old witch scornfully. "A likely story! Show me your hand, pretty maid, perhaps I can give you comfort without your needing to dig roots," and she seized Lydia's hand, which the trembling girl helplessly yielded. The old woman gazed at it for a time, then giggled approvingly. "You will live poor, my sweet," she said, "but die rich."

"Oh!" cried Lydia indignantly, "is this a situation to think of gold and wealth?"

"Gently, gently, my dove," continued the old woman, holding her hand firmly. "You will soon weep a great deal, but when the berries are ripe you will laugh again. Two suitors will come, one with brown hair and one with black. Beware of the black-haired one, he will bring you into trouble."

Lydia sighed.

"Yes, yes, my angel, he'll bring you trouble, the brown-haired lover is the right one; you must take him, though he is older, but drive the dark sweetheart out of your thoughts. There—you know all you need know, now go. I want no company in the business I have to do."

"Oh, go with me, good woman. I am so horribly frightened," replied the weeping Clytia.

"Little fool, who told you to come here? You came alone and you can go down alone," and the old woman's eyes flashed angrily.

"I won't go alone," said Clytia resolutely. "Either you will go with me, or I shall wait till somebody else comes."

"Do you want to gather the night-dew in vials to cure freckles, that your white skin may not turn yellow, or pick *liebessamen* or roots of *männertreu*?" Then with a sudden outburst of rage she darted an evil look at the frightened girl, and screamed: "May Satan bless you," and rising, muttered venomous oaths as she walked down the darkest of the forest paths, where she soon vanished among the firs.

Lydia, deeply troubled, sat down on a stone. The red glow in the west had faded. Had Laurenzano already come and been frightened away by the witch, or ought she to wait for him? Terrified and repentant, she cowered in the corner where the old woman had just crouched. She noticed that the turf had been cut into strange shapes as if by a knife, that light and dark stones were lying about in peculiar order, and that the grass was scorched. The old woman must have extinguished a little fire just before Lydia came. She now understood her angry farewell. Her presence had interrupted the witch's spells and driven her away. The young girl gazed anxiously into the dark wood behind her, fearing that the wicked woman might yet do her some harm. She would wait only fifteen minutes longer for the Magister, then dart like a roe down the forest path to reach the bridge before the gates closed. But

all continued still. No Paolo came. Tears filled her eyes as she sat solitary and alone on the Holtermann. "So I am really in the plight the old song describes:

' Before my weeping I will stay
To the cross-road I'll hie away,
To a field-flower be changed.' "

She was just on the point of returning home when she heard voices in the distance. Greatly excited, she strained her ears to try to distinguish Paolo's voice. She only heard three or four men talking loudly and rudely together. This was a new terror—how was she to pass the strangers, who moreover seemed intoxicated? It would be best to hide behind the bushes till the path was clear again. She hastily concealed herself, and almost immediately heard the voices close at hand.

"She must be here, the old witch said so," cried one rough fellow.

"But you'll do her no harm," replied a younger man.

"What should I do except what you mean to do yourself? If she's waiting for a sweetheart, she can take us as well as anybody else." Lydia's blood seemed to turn to ice. "I believe old Sibyl fooled us," said a third. "There's no human being here. Stop, somebody has been sitting there, and don't I see something white down yonder?" At this moment Lydia in terror darted up the slope and flew wildly back along the path by which she had come. The three fellows stood still an instant in bewilderment, then like clumsy mastiffs set off in pursuit of the light-footed deer. The ascent was very slight, and masculine strength proved

superior to feminine lightness ; the distance between the hunted girl and the three rascals following her steadily diminished. When Lydia had reached the old beech-tree that stood on the crest of the mountain, she clearly perceived that if she fled downward the three men would stop her from one side or the other. The instinct of terror made her take the road up-hill. Her pursuers had expected her to follow the other direction and lost sight of her for a moment.

"There, there," shouted one, pointing upward to where Lydia was running along the top of the mountain trying to reach the ruins of Heiligenberg. The chase began again, but in ascending the agile girl had a considerable advantage over the clumsy, half-intoxicated men, who were already preparing to abandon the pursuit, when the oldest proposed to take a path to the left and thus catch the flying game, who was undoubtedly struggling to reach Heidelberg. The trio turned noiselessly in this direction. After some time Lydia looked back. Her pursuers had stopped ; she could take breath. Half senseless from fright and exhaustion, she leaned against a beech-tree. Hundreds of lights were shining in the city below, and one window in the castle gleamed more cheerily than all the rest. What would she not have given to be there ! She would rather have been a prisoner in Sylvan's tower than here in the dark woods, overcome by fright. Gliding softly through the ruins of the ancient cloister amid which the evening mist was conjuring strange shapes, she considered whether to seek shelter among the crumbling walls. But she was afraid of the ghostly place, haunted by the spectres of walled-up monks. The moon had risen above the Königstuhl ; her rays fell

softly through the trees and shed a clear light on Lydia's path. The young girl's long shadow moved beside her, now stretching far down the slope, now standing erect against the side of the ravine. Just as she was coming out from behind a hillock she heard a suppressed giggle. She sprang to one side and darted up the ascent. Those horrible men were there again. One started up here, another yonder, the third leaped from behind a tree directly in front of her.

"Oh! Christ, have mercy," sighed the terrified girl. Just at that instant the third drunkard stumbled over a root and Lydia bounded past him with the speed of thought. But the chase could not last much longer; the three men, sure of victory, rushed forward, each pushing the other aside to be the first to seize the beautiful prize. Clytia's last hope was to gain the ruins of Michaelskirche on the brow of the mountain and hide herself in a niche there. She had already climbed the first wall, but the youngest of her pursuers was close behind; she made one bound forward and felt the ground suddenly vanish from under her feet. "The Pagan's Hole," was the terrible thought that darted through her brain; she fell through empty space, struck the earth heavily and lost consciousness. The next instant the foremost pursuer came to the entrance. The ruins were clearly visible in the moonlight, but all was still. It seemed as if the earth had swallowed the young girl. "Holy Spirits!" he muttered.

The two others now appeared, the oldest limping. "What have you done with her?" they growled angrily.

"I saw her run in here and when I followed she had vanished."

"She is hiding somewhere behind the walls," said the oldest, and swearing furiously the whole party searched the underbrush and masonry. No trace of the fugitive appeared. The three men looked at each other doubtfully. "I believe one witch sent us after another," said one. The oldest made the sign of the cross. "There's witchcraft in it," declared the youngest. "Perhaps she fell into the Pagan's Hole, if so she's dead," said the third carelessly. "Come, I'm tired of the business, I want to have a sleep." And the three vagabonds went down the mountain as undisturbed as if they had done nothing amiss.

The elderberry bushes growing over the walls of the ruined church exhaled a sweet fragrance, the wind rustled through the tops of the ancient trees which had shaded the Roman soldiers garrisoning the fortress and the monks in their cloister; the crickets chirped the same monotonous song that they had sung thousands of years ago, the moon shone brightly on the stones scattered about, but in a dark vault whose only opening was above, Lydia lay senseless. No one knew where she was and she herself was unconscious. The poor child lived only in the knowledge of Him, who hears even the death-gasp of the game in the depths of the forest and the sigh of the creature no human eye has seen.

CHAPTER XIII.

ON the morning of the day which proved so fateful to Lydia, Werner the miller and his son came down

from the Kreuzgrund behind Ziegelhausen along the bank of the brook to the village. His neighbors' mills and his own clapped merrily in chorus and the little stream glittered like morning dew. The meadows of the luxuriant valley though it was midsummer, were still as freshly green as in early spring.

"So you are certain it was Erastus' daughter?" said the miller to his red-haired offspring.

"Perfectly certain, father!"

"And you read the note yourself?"

"Yes, I read that she must be on the Holtermann an hour before sunset."

"Why did you do that?"

"Am I to run the Jesuit's errand's blindly? I saw that he was wrapping something in the handkerchief, and he wanted to make me think the object was to restore the young lady her lost property without her guessing the finder. I won't be used in that way. 'Be wise as serpents,' grandmother says."

"I am not blaming you, but I only wish I knew how I could baffle the plan of this priest of Baal. Erastus saved your mother's life by his skill; but he has a poor opinion of our community. I should like to be able to give him a better idea of our morals and at the same time show him my gratitude. I'm sorry for the young girl too. I must let her father know of this letter."

"Wouldn't it be better for me to go up this evening and separate them? You know I can imitate all sorts of beasts and birds, and even the devil himself tolerably well."

"No," said the old man sternly, "this is no business for boys." After the miller had attended to his errands in the city, he went at noon to Erastus' lodgings where

he learned that the physician had left town. He then asked to see Jungfrau Lydia. She had gone out. The old sectarian shaking his head retired muttering: "Now there's nothing left except to appeal to the conscience of the Italian priest himself, if he has one. Stay, the bells are just ringing for the evening service which the holy man holds in Heiligengeistkirche. Perhaps I shall meet the deluded girl there, at any rate the fine shepherd who lures his own sheep to ruin."

When he had reached the market-place below he entered the church, disdaining to observe any of the external forms of devotion customary when going into the house of God. The preacher had already commenced his sermon. It was on his usual theme of the wickedness of the world.

"An appropriate theme for you, you rascal," murmured the Baptist, looking around him for Lydia. In vain he scanned face after face from the back row of seats to the front; she was not there. "The lost sheep is rather better than the shepherd," he said to himself. "At least she does not prepare herself for a clandestine meeting at divine service." He now for the first time turned his attention to the preacher, who began to speak in warmer, more excited tones. He was describing the punishments of sin, but the steel mountain and pecking birds no longer played a part in his rhetoric. To-day he depicted from his own experience the tortures of a guilty conscience, describing the secret sinner moving timidly about, constantly gazing behind him lest some one should be standing there who had seen all, unable to look people straight in the face but glancing askance, whose troubled conscience referred everything to his own hid-

den sin, and who thus here on earth bore hell about with him in his own breast.

“Oho, is that the way it seems,” said Werner to himself, “then perhaps you may yet be saved.” After reflecting a short time he tore from a list of his customers which he carried with him, a strip of blank paper on which he wrote a few words. Then removing his woollen neck-handkerchief he folded it neatly, concealing the note within. “That’s the mail you invented yourself,” he muttered, smiling grimly. When the congregation began to sing the last hymn he left the church and cast a searching glance over the crowd gathered outside. At last he discovered in a young girl belonging to his sect the very messenger he needed; he quietly approached her and whispered a few words. Silent messages, concerted watchwords, signs of recognition, and all kinds of secret communications were not rare in the persecuted and oppressed Baptist community, so the young girl accepted without hesitation the commission Werner gave her. The bells rang, the congregation left the church, the market-place became deserted. Laurenzano passed out of the door in an irritated, troubled mood. “What did that sectarian want at the service?” he asked himself. “He insolently entered in the midst of the sermon, and how boldly towards the end he stood leaning against the pillar, staring intently at me, as if in describing the guilty conscience I were depicting my own condition.” He sighed, and then indignantly continued: “I’ll see that the magistrate pays another visit to the Kreuzgrund.”

At this moment a neatly-dressed peasant-girl approached, saying: “Herr Pastor, you lost something at the convent yesterday.”

Scarcely had he taken the offered handkerchief when she vanished round a corner. Paul glanced timidly around to see if he was observed, and then unfolded the kerchief which contained a tiny scrap of paper. It was doubtless from Lydia, suggesting some better place for the interview than the cross-roads. Hastily turning into the narrow street opposite, he stopped and read: "Fly, all is betrayed." Startled, he glanced behind him just as a loud voice cried: "He ought to have a fox's tail fastened to his collar and be flogged out of the city." It was the landlord of the Stag, speaking of his rival, the keeper of the Ox tavern. Paolo knew the voice well, but thought the words referred to himself, for he remembered the poor guests of the Stag for whom he had obtained lodgings in the thick tower. This was why he had been so coolly treated at the tavern. They knew he was acting under the directions of the Order, they knew he had plunged the four pastors into ruin — a stranger warned him. Did he allude to this treachery, the appointment with Lydia, or the story about the ex-jester's daughter? Or lastly . . . a thrill of terror ran through his limbs. At any rate he was betrayed. He rushed recklessly onward and did not come to his senses till he reached the Speyer gate. Pigavetta is there at the Imperial Diet, he thought in his vague terror, and Pater Aloysius also rose before his memory as a preserver in his physical and spiritual needs. He alone could counsel him, and the bishop would protect him. Paul dashed forward as if pursued by evil spirits. Outside the gate, on the way to Schwetzingen was a beer-garden. The musicians were just playing a new gavotte composed by the jolly Henry of Navarre, which the French had brought to Heidelberg.

"Fairest Gabrielle," was the beginning of the words to which the tune was set. In Paul's vague fear it sounded like a gibe and he quickened his pace as if some one had spurred him, while the merry tune pursued him far over the quiet fields. He did not breathe freely until he had left "fairest Gabrielle" behind him. The sun had set and a cool breeze from the Bergstrasse fanned his neck, when he asked himself whether he might not have been rather over-hasty in taking flight. He pulled the note from his pocket. It was written on coarse paper in a bold, firm hand, evidently a man's. Shaking his head he replaced the mysterious warning. Under any circumstances he would be obliged to consult Pigavetta about the matter, and in a somewhat calmer mood he pursued his way over the rough road between the fields of waving grain.

The Baptist after pausing a short distance off to watch the effect of his message, had also left the market-place. He saw the Magister glide into the narrow alley, start in terror, and dart rapidly away, but not in the direction of the appointed place of meeting.

"I should like to send such a message to all the priests of Baal," muttered the old man laughing. "I'll wager that every pulpit in this city of sin would stand empty the next morning." But part of his business still remained to be done, and he was not at liberty until twilight. "The deluded girl must be back by this time," he said as he came out of his last customer's house into the street. "She's probably ashamed and sorrowful, so I will appeal to her conscience and perhaps may be able to spare the good physician this grief," and though wearied and hungry he stoutly climbed the castle hill. Erastus' housekeeper was very anxious about Lydia's

long absence. "I have some samples of grain and another commission," said the miller. "She probably won't be away much longer, and I've already climbed the hill twice to-day."

Old Barbara, glad to have company in her solitude, set some millet porridge before him and entertained him with praises of her young mistress. Werner answered in monosyllables, listening even more anxiously than the woman to every sound. Midnight was approaching, yet the pair still sat waiting beside the dead embers of the fire on the hearth. At last the old housekeeper could endure her anxiety no longer, and wanted to rouse the people in the castle to search for Lydia, but the miller stopped her.

"It won't do to make an uproar. A young girl's fair fame is like the bloom on the peach or the frost blossoms on the window panes. Touch it, and it is gone. So keep quiet, Jungfer Barbara. I can guess where she is, but promise me to say nothing. If I have not found her by to-morrow noon, I'll come back here again. Until then don't utter a syllable about it to anybody." Old Barbara promised. It was a relief to her to have Werner take the responsibility.

When the Baptist had gone down into the city, he turned into one of the narrowest streets leading to the Neckar, and knocked three times in a peculiar way on the shutter of a house.

"Directly," answered a woman's gentle voice.

Werner entered and asked if his son was still there.

"He is asleep."

"Then wake him and give us both stout sticks."

After a short time the boy appeared looking very sleepy, but without complaint joined his father who

took firm hold of the gnarled staff offered him. On mentioning their names the sentinel at the bridge allowed them to pass.

"We are going across the Holtermann to the Kreuzgrund," said Werner.

"Oho," replied the boy, "I thought that was why you stayed away so long."

Silently, continuing his nap as best he could while walking, the tired lad followed his father. Crickets chirped around them and fire-flies flitted over the bushes. When they reached the ancient beech-tree on the crest of the mountain, the old man told his son to shout his loudest mountain call. The boy did so, at first in a hoarse weary voice, then more clearly, but all continued still. Here and there a bird stirred in the thickets and a cock crowed in answer from the Valley of the Seven Mills.

"There is no one here," said old Werner sadly, "why should she be? We'll go home and sleep."

"It seems as if I saw a fire over yonder, father," said the boy.

"Yes, you are right. A fire in the middle of the cross-roads — what does that mean?"

The miller and his son stole cautiously towards the glittering speck. "You go around there, and I'll go this way, then she can't escape us, if it is she."

The witch from the Kreuzgrund sat at the cross-roads in the very spot from which Lydia's presence had driven her. Before her lay the white skull of a child, around which she had put three tiny lights. A vessel containing some fluid of singular odor hung over a charcoal fire, and beside it writhed the headless bodies of three snakes. All sorts of articles used in incanta-

tions were scattered around. The sorceress herself was asleep. "Mother Sibyl," the miller shouted loudly in her ear, "where is the girl who was waiting here this evening?"

The witch started up, staring at Werner. "The fair Ly. . . ." she muttered half asleep, then stopped.

"Where is she?" the miller repeated.

"I don't know anything about her," mumbled the old woman, who had now collected her wits.

"You know everything, her name was on your lips. Answer me, or I'll tell the magistrate to-morrow that I've caught you for the second time on the cross-roads at midnight, and last week by the Linsenteich* before sunrise."

The witch laughed. "They'll burn you as well as me, if I tell what I know about you."

"But I shall die for the Lord Jesus Christ and you for swarthy Satan." The old woman was about to laugh scornfully, but the bushes behind her suddenly seemed full of living creatures. A cock crowed, then the grunting of swine was heard blended with an impish neighing. "Be quiet, George," called the miller angrily.

The witch looked timidly at him, then glanced behind her expecting to see in the thicket a man breathing fire from his open jaws. "What do you want to know?" she asked trembling.

"Where did the young girl go?"

"The sons of the tavern-keeper of the Rose and red-haired Maier frightened her away from here. She ran towards the cloister and I heard the three men

* Lentil Pond.

shouting from that direction. What they have done to her, I don't know."

Werner winced, then said anxiously: "And when was that?"

"About four hours ago, the moon was just rising."

"Then we have come too late. May God have mercy on your soul, if you had any share in *this*. And now stop this nonsensical witchcraft." As he spoke he kicked her kettle, overturning it, and the snake-fat falling on the coals blazed high in the air.

"Come out, George, and show her what kind of devil has frightened her."

The boy came out in front of the fire and looked mischievously at her.

"Plague take you and your father."

"Yes, the plague, always the plague," said the miller. "But if it ever comes it will not be at your summons. You'll yet meet with some terrible end, I tell you, though all your witchcraft isn't worth a withered nut."

With these words he took his son by the arm and went down the path leading to the Seven Mills.

"We must hunt up Maier and make him confess," he said. After a sorrowful pause, he added gravely: "What do you think the old woman will earn by her nocturnal arts?"

"Why, the wheel or burning at the stake."

"Very well, my son, then don't venture to act the devil again, for whoever even paints Satan on the wall is already half in his claws."

"But we've often driven people away by these tricks when they tried to disturb our meetings."

"I have never approved of it and you at least shall not take part in the mischief."

The lad walked on in front deeply offended, for he felt convinced that nothing but his great skill had induced the witch to confess.

"Do you believe she can practise witchcraft, father?" asked the boy.

"Wishing and doing are two things," replied the old man.

"But her neighbors say she can cause mice to overrun premises, can prevent the cows from giving milk, and can make women's hair fall out."

"Of course, when they do nothing in winter to destroy the vermin, feed the cattle poorly, and lead dissolute lives, it's always the fault of witchcraft."

"But the farmer's wife on the hill-side says Sibyl told her, 'if you don't get your hay in on Sunday, the devil will take it.' On Monday morning the hay was still lying safely in the meadow, but while they were raking it together a storm rose and swept the whole crop off to the devil."

"Chance, George, chance. She noticed that a thunder storm was threatening. The Evil Spirit is a spirit and has power over souls, not over bodies, or he would have prevented your mocking him just now. But beware that he does not attack you from within. He is powerful there."

CHAPTER XIV.

THE bats in the dark vault, disturbed by Clytia's heavy fall, fluttered wildly around. Toads crawled out of the rain-soaked ground under the opening and hopped clumsily towards the damp wall, and the frightened mice darted to and fro. The moon had reached her zenith and cast her cold rays through the square hole upon the moist wall. A sharp pain in her right foot roused Lydia from the swoon in which she had lain senseless—she knew not how long. Her head felt weary and confused and trying to rise she felt that her foot was sprained. Only half aware of her situation, she gazed up through the roof of the vault to the starry sky. The Lord to whom she had prayed for help had saved her from a terrible danger. "He will not leave me here to perish, either," she murmured with the patience of a person who is seriously ill. But as her eyes became more and more accustomed to the darkness, the moonbeams streaming obliquely in revealed a horrible scene. A dozen bats were whirring noiselessly through the vault, and repulsive lizards were crawling on the moist walls. A rat ran across her face and in spite of her pain she started up to drive the creature away. All was still above. Lydia knew that cries could attract no one except her pursuers, so she determined to spare her strength until dawn. Surely she could then succeed in making herself heard by children picking berries or by the numerous laborers who worked in the woods. She gazed longingly up at the

opening to see if the cold rays of the moon were not yet yielding to the warm sunbeams. Her back was bruised by the stones on which she had fallen, the sharp pain in her foot extorted moans of suffering, but she believed that she would be rescued, and patiently endured everything as a just punishment for having allowed herself to be tempted from the path of duty. How thankful she was that her father was away and not troubled about her. In the midst of these thoughts she fell asleep.

Lydia was roused by a stone that fell on her injured foot.

"There's nothing stirring," she heard a boy's voice say.

"I am here," she called in sudden terror, fearing her deliverers might go away.

"God be praised, Jungfrau," said a man's tones, "we didn't hear a sound and thought our search was vain. Have you strength enough to be drawn up by a rope?"

"I doubt it. My foot is sprained, and my back is injured."

"Then we must try whether the ladder will reach down."

"But you will do me no harm?"

"Why, don't you know me, Jungfrau Lydia? Werner, the miller from the Kreuzgrund behind Ziegelhausen?"

"You, Father Werner?" cried Clytia, sobbing with joy. "How did you find out I was here?"

"The wicked rascals who chased you said that you vanished here as if the earth had swallowed you, so we could guess where you were. The worthless scoundrels would have quietly let you die."

"Yes, it was terrible," said Clytia, "but God punished me for my sins."

The ladder, carefully guided over Lydia, was now lowered through the opening, and the old man descended carrying a lighted torch in his hand. "An ugly hole, this cellar," he muttered. "How the bats dart away from the light. You don't like it, do you, you daughters of darkness?" He carefully lifted Lydia, who threw her arms around his neck like a child, and cautiously climbed the rounds of the ladder to the upper world, where he laid her on the soft grass. The question now was how to bring the sick girl, resting so pale and feeble upon the ground, to the high-road. The miller at first thought of using the ladder as a litter and carrying her down on that. But it was hard and narrow. To procure a litter would have required too much time and attracted attention. Lydia, too, earnestly urged haste. So nothing remained except for the old man to lift the girl again and fasten her on his shoulders with his son's belt. The latter ran down to the village to get a small covered cart, while his father slowly and carefully descended the stony foot-path leading to the road. Lydia, clasping her arms tightly around the miller's neck, lay perfectly still, while her faithful friend chose the loneliest way through the woods and vineyards. "The lost sheep," he thought, "that was torn by the thorns and left bits of its wool hanging on the hedges. But when the shepherd finds it, he takes it on his shoulders rejoicing." He glanced at the delicate white hands clasped under his bristled chin. The sweet burden lay warm on his back, and the girl's soft cheek rested on his shoulder. A strange feeling stole over the grey-beard as he looked down at the white fingers; it

seemed as if an evil voice beside him whispered : " Your Martha never had such hands."

" What is that to you, old sinner," he bravely answered the tempter. " You've been among honest folk all your life, surely you won't join the rogues in your old age."

" Yet it would be delightful to be served by such hands," continued the first voice.

" But you have your old wife," he retorted sternly.

" Have not Hetzer, Rottmann and other prophets taught that when a Brother feels he has not yet found his true spiritual wife, he may cancel the old bond and enter into a new marriage?"

" Let the Judases teach what they please. Their end will be in keeping with their lives. Old Martha followed me to the second baptism and has always been a faithful wife."

" Then take two wives, as the prophets of Munster have allowed. Did not the holy Fathers Abraham, Isaac, Lamech, Gideon, and David have more than one wife, why not you also? True, the German princes forbade the practices of the Munster brethren, but the Count Palatine himself, who pursued them with fire and sword, afterwards followed their example."

" Silence, Satanas," said the old man; " the Scripture forbids polygamy in spite of Abraham and Philip of Hesse. God gave Adam only *one* Eve. He created *one* man and *one* woman, not one man and *two* women. Besides it says: ' the twain shall be one flesh,' and not the three or four. It is true, Martha is but skin and bones," he said to himself sighing.

" Am I very heavy for you to carry?" asked Lydia softly.

"No," he answered harshly. Then, perceiving that it would be better to talk with his companion than the evil Satan as who was only trying to tempt him from the right path, he told the young girl that his son had informed him of Laurenzano's appointment, and how all the rest had happened.

Lydia began to cry.

"So you know everything, and will surely think me very wicked."

"We are all mere flesh and blood," replied the old man good-naturedly. "Our souls will stumble so long as they walk on two legs and each bears the rock of offence within."

"I thank you for not reproving me more severely."

"That isn't my business," said the Baptist. "I have sins enough of my own to punish."

"Ah! you are a good man, but I dare not think what others will say of me."

"People must be allowed to talk, for geese can't," the old man answered. "Make your peace with God and let the rest go. See, there's George with the cart."

The little fellow who had personated the devil the night before stood beside his horses, cracking his whip merrily. "Now we'll put you gently in and close the cover," said Werner. This was not accomplished without much suffering and difficulty; then the miller, whom everybody knew, drove back unmolested through the city to the gate of the Ottheinrichsbau.

Careful Barbara had seen the cart coming across the draw-bridge and was instantly at hand, but the miller gave her no information whatever. The young girl had hurt her foot by a fall as all he said, and Lydia was carried carefully up-stairs. By Werner's advice Barbara

wrapped the limb in wet cloths. At noon Erastus returned home and put on a more suitable bandage. The good Baptist had slipped quietly away to avoid any thanks, and Lydia's father himself forbade the feverish girl to say anything that day and on the next was satisfied with the meagre account Clytia gave him. It was enough for him that her convalescence was progressing favorably, and old Barbara railed about the open root-pits in which more than one person had sprained a foot. When Erastus afterwards requested a more particular account, he was surprised by his daughter's entreaty that she might be allowed to say nothing about the cause of her accident. He shook his head, but did not press the question farther. "Some one else is to blame for her mishap," he thought, and at last really felt glad that she spared him fresh annoyances, for his business affairs claimed more of his attention than ever.

Nothing was heard of Magister Laurenzano in Heidelberg except that he had obtained leave of absence until the end of the collegiate vacation, and had particularly requested to be relieved from his duties as preacher at the convent.

The gay imperial city of Speyer with its independent bishopric was constantly becoming more and more crowded by the throngs arriving to attend the Imperial Diet, amid whose numbers individuals were easily lost sight of. But any one who had chanced to enter the cathedral on the evening of the day of Lydia's rescue would have seen a young man dressed in black kneeling contritely in the last confessional, which was the most secluded. His confession was over and the priest was impressively addressing him: A woman kneeling near caught the words: "Nothing but a long discipline, my

dear son, can restore peace and harmony to your troubled soul." From that time for several weeks the same stranger, at dawn and dusk, entered the cathedral and went down into the dark crypt under the chancel where he vanished in a side-chapel set apart for the clergy of the chapter.

"Where is Laurenzano spending his vacation?" the philosopher Pithopöus, who wanted an appreciative listener, asked at the round table of the Stag.

"His brother says he is in Speyer," replied Erastus, "but though I have enquired I can't hear a syllable about him from the gentlemen who are there in attendance on the elector."

"That's very possible," answered Pithopöus, who prized Laurenzano's interest in scholastic controversies. "Individuals disappear in the bustle that now pervades the city."

CHAPTER XV.

WHEN Clytia's convalescence had progressed so far that she was allowed to sit up with her foot resting on a chair carefully arranged by her father, she began to receive visits from her friends, who wanted to be told all the particulars of her accident. Frau Belier, especially, was determined to know the whole story and Lydia at last had no resource left except to gratefully avail herself of Barbara's open root-pits. Fortunately these busy maids and matrons regarded their own affairs after all as of paramount importance, and Lydia had sufficient

feminine cunning to divert inconvenient questions by tempting queries about some other subject.

"I am really a false serpent to repay all this love with deception," she said to herself reproachfully after her friends had gone.

So there were more visitors than she desired — but *one* person, whom she dreaded yet so longed to see, still remained absent. What could have prevented Paolo from coming to the place selected by himself? What prevented him now from at least enquiring of her father about his pupil's health? If the miller had not confirmed her supposition that the mysterious note came from Laurenzano, she would gladly have believed that her enemies in the convent had played some saucy trick upon her, but after old Werner's statement she could no longer doubt Paul's guilt.

"He has no heart," she murmured, "or he would have been here long ago." But the fewer the tidings from him, the more mysterious his conduct seemed. Had he left the city where he had wrought so much woe? Then he would never return. The thought brought a strange dread, the consciousness that she would then for the first time know the meaning of real unhappiness. A familiar elastic step and her father's voice were heard in the lofty echoing corridor. Erastus' head appeared at the door.

"Herr Laurenzano would like to call on you, my child. Lie perfectly still, that you may not hurt your foot."

Lydia turned pale, then flushed crimson, but the next instant she saw the architect and the disappointment restored her self-possession. Smiling pleasantly, she held out her little white hand, and after the hand-

some, dark-eyed Italian had gracefully congratulated her on her recovery, he told her that out of regard for her state of health he had not yet commenced making the necessary repairs on the windows of Erastus' apartments. With her permission he would now begin the work. Lydia thanked him for his thoughtful kindness, and said that the work would not disturb her at all, she could move into the back rooms. The architect looked sorrowfully at her, like a boy denied a long anticipated pleasure, then stammering and blushing began to explain that his visit was intended to prevent her giving up the pleasant sunshine so beneficial to every invalid. He could not possibly pursue his task quietly and cheerfully if obliged to reproach himself for hourly delaying her recovery. He would rather leave the windows as they were. Erastus smilingly agreed with him; in short Lydia was forced to yield and promise neither to leave her room, nor shut out the healthful air on pleasant days. So the happy architect henceforth daily appeared on the scaffold and seized every opportunity of passing Lydia's window. He told her about his work, complained of the indolence of German laborers who spent half the day in eating, drinking, and sleeping, and praised the temperance and industry of his Italian countrymen. The young girl bending over her sewing listened with a smile to the Neapolitan, who evidently considered talking the greatest pleasure in life. But when the neighbors looked up more and more frequently, Lydia jestingly told him that he was by no means an industrious Italian. "You say one German drinks as much as ten Italians, but it seems to me one Italian talks as much as twenty Germans. Now let me see how industrious you are."

Felix much abashed withdrew, but Lydia smiled as she thought of the resemblance between the brothers. "I am afraid of the Magister and yet long to see him. I like the architect and yet send him away. Foolish heart, to prefer pain to pleasure."

One morning the architect spoke of his brother. The latter was at the bishop's court in Speyer where he had several acquaintances. So it was really as Lydia had feared. He had again become Brother Paulus and returned to the Jesuits. Her heart throbbed with passionate grief as she bent over her sewing and two large tears fell on the delicate linen. Felix pretended not to notice it, but while angry with Paul on account of these tears he first realized how closely his own heart clung to the beautiful fair-haired girl.

Clytia could no longer doubt that the gallant architect, whom she preferred to any man except Paul, was really trying to win her love, but her heart was filled with grief for him whom she must now really number among the dead. Had he not basely left her in the lurch, humiliated her in her own eyes? Was he not still pursuing his dark crooked ways and thereby renouncing his love, if indeed he ever cared for her at all. What would she not have given to escape being daily reminded of him by his brother, and yet she never listened more attentively than when the latter told her about his childhood in Naples, how with Paul and their little sister he had played ball in the orange groves with the beautiful golden fruit, hunted for bright shells on the sea-shore, hidden in the hollow trunks of the olive-trees, searched for fragments of ancient carvings and bits of marble amid the clumps of box and laurel. As he related the adventures they had had with huge earthworms, tiny

serpents, scorpions, and butterflies she saw the brown-skinned elder brother and the still darker younger one so distinctly that she felt as if *she* were their sister, and in her dreams, often fancied herself the little dead girl. "Take the brown-haired one, the black one will make you miserable," the witch had said, and Lydia had grown superstitious since that terrible evening on the Holtermann. The sorceress' words seemed only too probable. The girl's heart could not wholly free itself from the spell of the mysterious priest, so after Paul's faithless flight it remained in the hands of his more loyal brother. Involuntarily these secret thoughts, of which Lydia herself was still unconscious, first found expression in her dreams.

Over the door of the Ruprechtsbau where Felix lodged, there was a beautiful specimen of ancient German sculpture before which Lydia when a child had often stood gazing in delight. Two lovely angels, their heads shaded by each other's wings, are holding a wreath of roses whose leaves enclose a pair of compasses, the symbol of the builder's trade. The builders' guild has doubtless perpetuated itself in this emblem, but there was a legend current among the people that these two beautiful twin boys had been the sole joy of the architect who planned the castle. To have them always with him he frequently took them up on his lofty scaffold, delighting in the merry lads who were totally free from giddiness. But one day, however, one made a misstep and dragged the other down with him. The architect was so overwhelmed with sorrow that work on the building ceased. Instead of directing the labor, the afflicted father daily wove a chaplet for the dead, adorned it with white roses and carried it to the churchyard of Peterskirche where

his dear ones were buried. The Emperor Ruprecht, angered by the slow progress of the building, told the priest who had conducted the children's funeral service to reprove the architect. The latter said that everything was planned except the finish of the gateway, for which in his grief he could invent no design. The priest exhorted and consoled him as well as he could; that very night the twins appeared to their father in the guise of angels bearing back the wreath of roses he had placed on their grave in the morning. When the light of the rising sun waked the architect, he remembered the pleasant dream; it seemed as if the perfume of roses still filled the room and on rising, lo! there fresh and fragrant lay the wreath which he had taken to his children's grave the day before and seen lying withered on it in the evening, but the white roses had now turned red. Instantly perceiving what ornament he was to carve on the gateway, he chiselled his two sons as they had appeared to him in the form of angels holding a rose-garland; and in the centre of this garland placed the symbol of his art, to which he now bade an eternal farewell. The keystone of the vaulted gateway was put in on St. John's Day 1408, and the Emperor Ruprecht himself pronounced the dedicatory speech; but when he wished to thank the builders the architect had vanished. While all the bells were ringing, filling the valley of the Neckar with their mingled notes, the man whose fame they were celebrating, a sorrowful pilgrim, was climbing Michael's Path to the cloister of Heiligenberg, where he became a monk and gazed from his cell at the tower that rose over his darlings' graves, till his two boys again appeared to him, crowned him with roses, and bore his soul to Abraham's bosom. Lydia had heard from her

old nurse this legend of the sculpture and whenever she thought of angels the lovely bearers of the garland over the gateway she daily passed rose in her memory. None of Meister Colins' statues on the superb Ottheinrichsbau bore even a distant semblance of the lovely expression these angel-faces wore. One night, after Felix had again been talking during the evening of his games with Paul in the rose-garden at Naples, Lydia dreamed she was floating through the air from the summit of the Holtermann over to the castle and that just as she was about to descend the two angels from the Ruprechtsbau came flying to meet her. One was solemn and stiff, while the other who looked like Meister Felix smiled pleasantly at her. Suddenly the one with the grave, beautiful expression Magister Paolo always wore when teaching, opened his lips and said: "Take Felice." Then she woke, but still distinctly heard the witch saying: "The brown-haired one is the right one," and starting up from her pillow in terror saw the moon shining brightly into her little room. She pondered a long time over the strange vision, in which the pleasantest impressions of her childhood and the terrible experience of the last few weeks were so confusedly blended, then fell asleep. In the morning she could not resist the desire to look at the two angel-faces and see if they really resembled the brothers. The court-yard was still lonely and silent. It was the first time Lydia had been out since her accident. She took a glass to draw some water at the well-house adorned with columns brought from Charlemagne's palace at Ingelheim in the Palatinate, and while lowering and raising the bucket gazed at her ease at the beloved statues. She met no one to disturb her in her early

task. The glass filled with delicious water from the spring that supplied the well glittered in her hand. The morning sun shone brightly on the Ruprechtsbau and the young girl was obliged to go nearer to the carving in order to see it distinctly. Shading her eyes from the light with her hand she gazed intently at the familiar sculpture. The boys smiled pleasantly down at her, the younger one on the left might have represented the grave Paul, the older one on the right the merry artist. 'The right!—The witch's words "he is the right one" darted through Clytia's mind. And did not the compasses in the centre of the wreath plainly symbolize Felix's art? Not the breviary, but the architect's tool is twined with the flowers of love. True, both of them are dressed as acolytes. The idea confused her. The angel faces seemed to float, to beckon to her, to salute her. Dazzled by the light, the wreath wavered before her eyes as if loosening. Suddenly a full-blown rose fell close at her feet and she looked up in astonishment but saw no one. Picking up the flower she noticed that it was the same variety of deep red blossom carved above in the angels' garland, and with a half-superstitious feeling glanced upward to see whether the exquisite rose had dropped from the wreath held by the beautiful children. None were missing and all the windows on that side of the building were shut except one in Felix's room. Smiling, she put the rose in the glass of water and went back as fast as her lame foot would allow, for a maid-servant came out of the house and seemed disposed to question her about her early visit to the court-yard. She did not like "red-haired Frenz," who in admiring the rose pressed forward rather too familiarly.

Lydia's heart and brain were confused and bewildered. She could not succeed in regarding the strange dream and the startling morning greeting on her first walk as purely accidental, and sat by the window, pursuing the vision in a reverie, when her father entered and for the first time alluded to her relations with Felix. He praised the architect's great talent and upright character, and reminded her that though he himself was not an old man, yet he was in delicate health and exhausted by work. What would become of her, if God should suddenly summon him to another world? Lydia dried her tears and kissed her beloved father. He did not require an answer, but when left alone in her room overwhelmed with sweet confusion she gazed tenderly down at the rose, saying: "God must know why it is better so. The baneful spell exerted by the Magister hurled me, in the most literal sense of the word, into a gulf, the quiet charm that draws me to the kind architect has set my feet amongst roses, not amongst serpents" — and blushing deeply she bowed her face over the flower, and eagerly inhaled its delicious fragrance.

That very morning Felix's work had progressed as far as Lydia's window. He saw his rose in a glass of water on her table and cast a look of gratitude at the blushing girl. Then he continued his task of repairing the consoles and pilasters around her window, which judging from the length of time spent in the work seemed to need special care. While thus employed Felix related the most amusing stories to the beautiful invalid, who sometimes sat on the window-sill, sometimes reclined on a pillow to rest her foot, and however timid Lydia had been in the Magister's society she did not allow herself to be awed by his vivacious brother.

The young girl was proud of her complete control of a man like him, for a docile horse makes even a timid rider blithe and bold.

“I wish you could advise me in my work, Signorina,” said Felix. “Glancing in at your window makes Meister Colins’ figures seem to grow colder and stiffer day by day. You have lived among them so long—have the old worthies told you nothing of their inner life, by means of which I might impart some little expression to their vacant faces?”

“Oh! yes,” replied Lydia gravely. “On still nights they quarrel horribly.”

“Quarrel! *Corpo di Venere*, you must tell me about it.”

“No, I don’t betray the secrets of my fellow-lodgers.”

“Yet you said they quarrelled.”

“Does that surprise you? Surely you must see how ill-suited they are to each other.”

As Clytia persisted in refusing to gossip about the disputes of the statues, Felix, rubbing his forehead, said: “I remember I once fell asleep up here. If I tell you what I heard in my dream, will you repeat to me what you overheard?”

“Perhaps so,” replied Clytia, “let me hear what you have to say.”

“I had been thinking of a golden-haired angel, who lodges higher than many planets, and while doing so dropped into a nap.”

“The angel thanks you,” said Clytia pertly.

“After a time I suddenly heard Faith, Hope, and Charity near me say: ‘We are the only ones akin to each other in this mixed company and will have nothing

to do with the Pagans on either side of us.' Then Justice yawned so loud that it might have been heard all over the court-yard, and sighed mournfully: 'How lonely I feel here in the corner beside these tiresome virtues. What has Justice to do with self-righteous folk? If I were only over yonder next to Strength, I might at least keep a strict watch to see that he breaks no more pillars as proofs of his youthful vigor.' Hercules now attempted to begin a conversation with Samson: 'Brother,' said he, rapping with his club, 'it was far livelier when we went lion-hunting, to say nothing of the honey.' But didn't he get a snubbing! 'What do you mean by calling me brother,' said the haughty Jewish hero. 'You belong to the Philistines I slew and I want nothing to do with you.' Then I heard Jupiter sneeze and glanced up to see if the Father of the Greek gods was going to talk with the Egyptian Serapis. But they were looking in opposite directions and did not vouchsafe each other a pleasant word. Then Zeus gave one glance down at Mars and Venus and sighed: 'Dear me, how thin they have grown!' Didn't you mean something of this kind when you said that Colins' figures did not agree with each other? You have quick ears, *bellezza*, and a poetic mind."

"I suppose," replied Lydia, turning up her little nose, "that you imagine we think of nothing but cross-stitch while we are sitting all day over our sewing. Yet, even when a child, it was perfectly evident to me that there was a far different harmony and unison of spirit expressed in the twin angels on the Ruprechtsbau, than in the figures which Meister Colins has placed here, some taken from his cloister school in Malines, others from Italy, where you are still semi-pagan."

"You are right, Signorina, but we are accustomed to this medley at home."

"Your brain, too, is doubtless so furnished that biblical characters and the Greek gods wander through it hap-hazard as they do on Herr Colins' façade," replied the young girl mischievously. Then she blushed at her own boldness, but Felix's boundless admiration was too tempting an inducement to a little pertness on the part of Clytia who, just escaped from school, still missed her daily skirmishes with the aristocratic pupils.

"If you speak of a want of harmony," said the artist, somewhat nettled by his companion's lack of respect for his masculine knowledge, "the first thing to be mentioned is the insipid German maxims in black letter, which the late corpulent Count Palatine put under the gods and heroes, where I would fain have read a classic Latin epigram. But you are perfectly right, this whole façade is a symbol of the discord that extends through our intellectual life. The beauty of Greece and the virtues of Christianity are contending for mastery in our hearts. But it is not only the figures that are contradictory, the antique and Gothic forms are at variance. The harmony of construction, which constitutes genuine classic architecture is lacking. How obtrusively the Gothic escutcheons and shields break the antique lines of the portal! It is the picturesque charm of the contrast between the red sandstone and the blue sky that produces the best effect, and when the elector recently threatened to burn down the carved casket he so hated, I involuntarily thought how beautiful the edifice would be as a ruin with the blue sky gleaming through open casements."

"Merciful Heavens!" cried Lydia. "As long as

we live so sky-high, I trust the experiment won't be tried; and now go to your work; I'll listen to no lectures up here which may end in your breaking your neck."

Felix turned pale and withdrew deeply wounded. His prospects were better than he supposed; but Lydia had noticed how the neighbors were stretching their necks to look up at the scaffold on which Meister Felice was carrying on his siege, and had heard red-haired Frenz say that Lydia's window must be extraordinarily in want of repairs, since the Italian gentleman never left it. "They'll be a handsome couple," Bachmann replied in a voice by no means low — "the dark Italian and a girl fair as an angel. I shall rejoice, Frau Barbel, when they go to church together." This was the reason Clytia had dismissed Felix so abruptly.

A sultry noon-tide followed the beautiful morning. Lydia sat quietly at her work. Since her dream of the preceding night the images of the two brothers blended so confusedly that she could scarcely distinguish them. But the present at last asserted its rights. The gloomy priest vanished in the merry artist, and after Lydia had accustomed herself to the thought that the Magister could never be hers and had merely trifled shamefully with her affections, it afforded her a melancholy satisfaction to find so much of her former idol in her gay familiar friend. So there was loyalty even in her faithlessness. In reality she still loved Paul in Felix. Meantime the sadly depressed artist was standing outside on his scaffolding. The fierce heat that preceded a thunder storm oppressed him and Lydia's repulse had bitterly offended him. He made no attempt to continue the jesting conversation of the morning and did not

even hum a tune. "Surely it isn't because I have vexed him that he has become so silent," thought the kind-hearted child as she glanced upward at the cloudy sky. A gust of wind blew the dust into her eyes and whirled the loose leaves to her lofty height. "If only the storm doesn't burst before he gets down from his scaffold," she was thinking anxiously just when the tempest broke. Windows rattled, shutters banged, tiles fell from the roofs, boards swept from the scaffold crashed down into the court-yard; slates, panes, bricks came clattering from above, and confused cries and shrieks rose from below. Lydia ran to close her window and saw Felix clinging convulsively to the swaying scaffold.

"Come in, come in here!" she called in terror.

He shook his head sullenly, making a sign that he would climb down by the poles as soon as the wind subsided. Another gust blew a shower of tiles from the roof and shook the whole scaffold.

"Felix, Felix," cried the frightened girl despairingly stretching her arms towards him.

A joyous smile flitted over his features and with a single bound the agile youth stood by her side.

Just as Lydia closed the window Felix clasped her in his strong arms. "I have won you by storm!" he exclaimed exultingly, but she silently pushed him away. "You called me in, now keep me," he said tenderly, "you wanted to save my life, now save it in reality."

Lydia gazed long and earnestly at him, as if she were scanning a dead face and seeking to recognize in it the old familiar expression it wore in life. Then blushing deeply, she bent her head. But Felix with loud exclamations of delight, clasped his arms around her neck, and his lips sought hers. Even the crash of the

tempest now raging outside did not disturb his bliss. The rain poured into the court-yard. What cared he? At every flash of lightning he kissed her quivering eyelids, at every peal of thunder he pressed his mouth to her trembling lips. "I have plighted my troth to you amid lightning and thunder; may they destroy me if I am ever faithless."

The voice of Erastus who had also been driven home by the storm, was now heard outside. Lydia started in terror, but Felix clasping her hand firmly led her towards the physician, who drawing back an instant in surprise, said smiling: "So that's the way matters stand," and kissed the girl's pure forehead. Lydia made no answer, but laid her pretty blushing face on her father's faithful breast.

"You will be a welcome suitor if you abjure papistry," Erastus said to Felix.

The young man started like a shying steed. "You cannot mean that I must confess a belief my heart does not share," he cried.

"No, that is certainly not my meaning," replied Erastus; "but when you stole my child's heart you surely must have known I would never choose a papist for my son-in-law. What I oppose in Olevianus' church-discipline here is priestly rule, the slavery of the conscience, how could you expect I would ever allow my child to go to your confessionals?"

"She shall not, my noble friend. She shall live according to her faith, I according to mine."

"Where would that be possible? Certainly not in Heidelberg. You would nowhere find acceptance as a citizen and in your country my child would instantly go to the dungeons of the Inquisition."

"It is possible in Austria," replied Felix. "I'll return at once to Meister Colins in Innsbruck. Noble-hearted Emperor Max allows the professors of both religions free exercise of their faith and marriages between persons who differ in belief are by no means infrequent there."

Erastus shook his head doubtfully. Lydia's quiet resignation made him question whether after all his child was not merely acting in obedience to his wishes, and whether her young heart was sufficiently mature for binding vows? At last he said: "I will enquire more particularly about the state of affairs in Innsbruck, but do you also try to learn more of our faith. Lydia is still young. Let us defer the final decision till a later day." So the matter remained. True, Felix would fain have entered at once into the privileges of an acknowledged lover, but as Erastus permitted him to see Lydia as often as before, he was satisfied for the present. When his work was ended he sought Clytia and sat talking and jesting by her side. She was always kind and cordial to him, but there was no change in her quiet thoughtful manner, and she had assumed an air of timid reserve which prevented any demonstrative display of tenderness. Now that the excitement of deciding her destiny was over the young girl felt as if her heart was divided between two powers. She loved, but which — Paolo or Felice? She was betrothed, but her father forbade any public acknowledgment of the engagement. Ever gentle and sweet-tempered she permitted Felix to love her, without however granting him the smallest privileges. Usually when the artist came in the evening her Dante lay ready, and by obliging him to read aloud to her she kept his passion within

strict bounds. But even the majestic measures of Dante's verse fell in melodious cadences from the lips of the artist-lover, and we can easily imagine which canto he longed to reach in the hope that the sweet story of Francesca da Rimini would melt the ice of Clytia's reserve. But Lydia had wisely glanced over the pages in advance and was on her guard against so threadbare an expedient. The fifth canto containing the narrative of the hapless lovers lay open in its place on the evening Felix had so long anticipated, but Lydia received it with maidenly austerity. The artist had carefully curled his locks and carried in his hand one of the dark crimson roses that had been his first love-token, but he could not find courage to give it to her, for she took a seat much farther away from him than on any former occasion. True, on this occasion Felix read as beautifully or almost as beautifully as "he," but just as he was about to commence the tale of the lovers, who also read together "of Lancelot, how him love thrall'd" till "ofttimes by that reading our eyes were drawn together, and the hue fled from our alter'd cheek" and "When of that smile we read, the wished smile, rapturously kiss'd by one so deep in love, then he, who ne'er from me shall separate, at once my lips all trembling kiss'd"* she closed the book in girlish scorn and the "in its leaves that day we read no more," was fulfilled to the great annoyance of Meister Felix. Vexed and disappointed, he sat down by her side and turned the pages of her prayer-book where he found a pressed blue flower. The sight pierced his heart, for when his own rose had withered the old maid-servant threw it out of the window. He hastily closed the little volume

* Translation by H. F. Carey.

that contained only Paolo's flowers. The next evening Lydia requested him to read the sonnets of his beloved master Michael Angelo. While doing so he was filled with happiness to note how tenderly her blue eyes rested on him, but when he paused to return her gaze she said as if in a dream: "he is paler." Then Felix perceived that she had only sought Paolo's likeness in his features. The young girl constantly grew more quiet and sad. It seemed as if the brilliant color in her cheeks was fading. "She has deceived herself," he sighed. "If the sunflower is prevented by force from gazing at the sun, it withers. Paolo will always be her Apollo. Poor child!" But a colder feeling stole into his own heart and he could find no delight in a love he really owed to another and which through him was still bestowed upon his brother. "She wanted to marry Paolo in effigy," he muttered, "and now she does not even find the portrait a likeness."

CHAPTER XVI.

AT the close of the mysterious *exercitia* Paul returned to Heidelberg from Speyer. His brother found him grave and pale but calmer than before. Instead of the passionate flash in his eyes which had often startled Felix, he frequently found him struggling to repress tears. He had not gone back to his post at the convent. The pastor of a neighboring village, who was considered a Lutheran at heart, undertook his duties there. The news of the accident that had befallen the girl he loved reached him from the lips of the abbess, whose suspic-

ions had been aroused by Paul's unexpected disappearance and Lydia's equally sudden illness and who had therefore come nearer the truth than others. While telling the story the old countess had gazed at him with a strangely cold and searching look, her fingers meantime absently playing with her imaginary rosary. Fortunately for him he did not at once connect this event with his appointment at the cross-roads, so though startled he could ask without embarrassment for farther particulars.

"I heard the news on the same day your letter came from Speyer," said the Countess Palatine coldly, again fixing a searching gaze upon him.

Paolo, much confused, rose and took a hurried leave. This woman evidently saw through him, she need only open her lips and he would be a ruined man.

To the one sin against the pastors was already added the second against Erastus, whose child if not crippled for life—at all events had had her peace of mind ruined by him. He no longer dared to enter the convent and sharply refused Felix's invitation to share his rooms in the castle, preferring to occupy lodgings in the market-place, where as his lighted windows showed he often worked until late into the night. During the day he would stand for hours at the window, gazing sorrowfully at the throng or following with his eyes when the square had grown empty any one who chanced to cross it, as if envying every individual his freedom. After some time had passed, during which a certain degree of intimacy had again arisen between the brothers, Felix told him of his engagement to Clytia. Paul turned pale and for the first time the tiger-glare in his eyes startled the artist; then he turned mutely towards the window.

Felix approached and threw his arm around his shoulder.

"I know you loved each other," he said, "but you have not released yourself from your bonds. Give up your Order, and I will instantly retire. Clytia is too good for a plaything, she must not be plucked for passing amusement and then thrown away like a way-side flower."

"I have made no objection," said Paul hoarsely.

"Then you resign her?" replied Felix gravely.

"It is best so. I tried to free myself while in Speyer but did not succeed. It is no easy matter to shake off our fetters. To escape, I should have been forced to become a Protestant in reality — and I can't do that. I should have been obliged to give up all hope of returning to Italy — and that also I cannot do. I cannot be free, but I have vowed never again to allow myself to be used as a tool."

Felix pressed his hand. "You ought to leave this doubtful position here."

"And I will. But I can only do so by the orders of my superiors, for which I am waiting, God alone knows with how much suffering."

So the brothers parted. Grief for the loss of Clytia had led Paul to express the real feelings of his heart more openly than ever before, and Felix now suspected what terrible conflicts had been fought behind the mask of his cold pale features.

The Magister had returned to Heidelberg oppressed by a deep sense of shame. He had been kindly received, but when asked how he had spent his leave of absence he turned pale and made evasive replies. The cordiality with which the common people greeted him

burdened him. "You so little deserve their good opinion," he said to himself. Since by his brainless flight he had confessed his own unworthiness and afterwards confirmed the acknowledgment in the confessional and by a written statement, he seemed to himself a marked man. Although in a wholly negative manner his secret impurity had become external and palpable and it seemed as if the sin he had merely planned had thereby been actually committed. He involuntarily strove to read in the features of each acquaintance whether his flight was known in Heidelberg, yet dared not make the slightest allusion to it, lest he should himself betray it. With his secret always on his lips, he was in constant terror that he might himself disclose it. Ever expecting to hear it, startled by every accidental word, he wished to associate artlessly with the innocent, but his sin was ever present and the most trivial incident often drove the blood to his heart. So he moved among his fellowmen, humbly, anxiously, modestly, yet full of suspicion and distrust with the timid manner peculiar to nocturnal beasts by daylight, the pitiable image of a bad conscience. Besides, accident reserved for him a special punishment, wholly unsuspected by any one else. There are new tunes, which spread like epidemics and for a time monopolize popular favor only to be at last as completely forgotten as their predecessors. At that time the newest tune in Heidelberg was the gavotte composed by the jovial Huguenot, Henry of Navarre: "Oh! fairest Gabrielle," which Paul had heard played when he fled to Speyer. The baker's boy who carried the warm loaves to the houses in the morning whistled shrilly: "Oh! fairest Gabrielle." The cobbler's apprentice, who delivered to customers every forenoon the shoes

his master had mended, took care that she should not be forgotten. Through the open windows floated the "fairest Gabrielle," in whose praise the young girls of the Palatinate poured forth their yearning emotions. "Fairest Gabrielle," was played every evening by the bands of musicians in the public gardens, and the drunken student sought his lodgings long after midnight, still humming "fairest Gabrielle." Tiresome as this everlasting repetition of the same tune was to a nervous person, to Paul it was also associated with the remembrance of his moral downfall. If his thoughts ever wandered from the cheerless recollection of his bondage, his guilt, the oppressive consciousness of being a perjured priest, the hated melody instantly rang out again and he saw himself in the unworthy position of a priest put to flight by his own evil conscience, while in his ears echoed the warning of his unknown monitor: "Fly, all is betrayed." He had met in the street the red-haired boy to whom he had given the message to Lydia, and the lad greeted him with such evident mockery that Paolo flushed to his very brow. Since then he had dreaded to find in every peasant lass the bearer of the warning, a second person who knew his disgrace. Each jeering look that any unruly pupil of the Institute ventured to cast at him during the lesson hours disturbed his composure. He could not shake off the feeling that people were watching him, talking about him. His ears seemed to be ringing with their abuse, and as pale and agitated he looked away when about to receive a greeting, he was really treated with less cordiality than at first and saw in this a confirmation of his belief that universal contempt rested upon him. Day and night he pondered over the doubt whether his betrayal of the

pastors could be proved, whether in case of an investigation he could deny the appointment with Lydia. All his thoughts were centred on this one point; he was fast approaching a state of melancholy and monomania. A less sensitive nature would have easily disregarded sins which in reality had never been committed; his melancholy disposition increased the evil. In his own eyes he was not a young man who had erred, but a priest who had violated his vows and lost his consecration. God punishes the errors of men with a severity proportioned to the development of their moral perceptions. No one can enjoy at the same time the pure delights of the ideal and the base pleasures of sensuality, for the proverb '*quod licet bovi, non licet Jovi,*' holds good even when inverted."

"You wished to buy unlawful pleasure and your purchase has brought you sorrow instead," he said to himself. "You have obtained your just due, only your just due." Yet he felt as if great injustice had been done him from early youth.

To these griefs was added sorrow for his lost love. Since Clytia had become another's he first realized that his feeling for the lovely fair-haired girl was more than a voluptuous dream of the senses. He might have been so happy, why had he thrust this joy from him? Now that it was too late, his love had become a genuine passion.

Burdened by this mental oppression he soon became a different person in public. The Jesuitical tirades by which in the pulpit he had formerly excited the admiration of the young no longer crossed his lips. Since a genuine feeling had entered his heart, the pious phrases dropped away like withered leaves. The quickening germ of a new life swelling within cast out every-

thing unreal, false, and artificial. He prayed frequently for himself, but in the pulpit he lacked fluency. Even while following the coffins of those whom he accompanied to their last resting-place he felt empty, destitute of feeling, and miserable. Verily the grief of the survivors for whom he prayed did not weigh upon his soul. For aught he cared they might go begging. Verily he was not solicitous about the fate of the deceased in the other world; he might go to Hell or Heaven as God willed. Sorrow for sin is a selfish emotion that destroys all sympathy for the woes of others. While walking in his black robes behind the coffin, Paolo had but one wish—to lie himself in the narrow box and be buried in the cool, still earth, above which the trees and flowers bloomed, the birds sang, the clouds floated, and on which at night the moonbeams rested so quietly and peacefully. All the religious commonplaces, by which he had formerly drawn tears from the Christians assembled at a funeral, were now effaced from his memory. Since *one* true emotion, grief for his lost happiness, now ruled him, all artificial feelings, all false sentiment vanished. The respect shown by the people to him, a sinner, crushed him to the earth. Every greeting paid to the dignity of his position told him that he was a liar and he was ashamed of an office to which his heart was a stranger.

While in such a mood, as he was again preparing for a service in the church his feelings overpowered him. "Why can you not break these chains?" he asked himself. "Who tells you that this is your destiny? Why do you not test which is the stronger, a fate that years ago seized the child or the mature will of the man?" For the first time he resolved to act without Pigavetta's

advice, and resign his office of preacher without consulting his Superiors. True, this would not make him free, but it would be *one* lie the less.

“Magister Laurenzano begs to be relieved from his ecclesiastical duties,” said President Zuleger, a young Bohemian, at the meeting of the consistory in the auditorium of the monastery formerly occupied by the barefooted friars. “It is a pity to lose his great oratorical talent, but as no ecclesiastical duties are incumbent upon the holder of his position in the Institute, the request must be granted.” The members of the council nodded assent. “*Conclusum*,” said the president to the secretary, “the petition is granted, but with the expectation that Magister Laurenzano of his own accord will from time to time expound the gospel to the parish. *Fiat decretum* — but let it be worded in a friendly manner,” the president added. The secretary of the consistory did his best, yet we who know Magister Laurenzano’s state of mind can hardly blame him for not fulfilling the wishes of the learned body. While Paolo was apparently turning from God, divine Grace had commenced a work in his heart, which through repentance and sorrow was purifying him into a new man. The Magister did not tell his ecclesiastical tyrants of his new resolves. He preferred to wait for the orders he was to receive. But Pigavetta did not seem to notice Paul’s disappearance from the pulpit, indeed he acted as if the young priest were not in existence at all.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE Imperial Diet at Speyer was over and amid the thunder of artillery the elector's court had again returned to Heidelberg castle, which during the session had been used only for the accommodation of distinguished guests. The last parties of gentlemen returning home passed through the city at the same time; they were Polish, Transylvanian, and Hungarian magnates, who had sent home for servants and fresh horses to meet them in Heidelberg. Two days after their departure a contagious disease broke out in the tavern where these servants had spent the night and threw all the inmates of the house on the sick-bed. Erastus was called in and examined the patients, who were tossing in a violent fever and had blue, violet, and mottled swellings on their faces, breasts, and armpits. The bronzed countenance of the elector's physician grew deadly pale when he noted these symptoms, but he said nothing except to call for a sponge wet with vinegar, which he fastened over his mouth, telling his assistants to do the same. The latter then carried all the sick to the Gutleuthaus, a hospital located above Heidelberg, and built in bygone days for the accommodation of returning Crusaders infected with leprosy. The taverns where the unclean guests had lodged were vacated, the walls of their rooms were washed with lye, the beds burned, and the doors nailed up. No one was to be allowed to enter the infected chambers for six weeks except the medical atten-

dants, who from time to time were to repeat the processes of purification. The population of the afflicted quarter was sorely troubled. The matter was kept quiet in order not to injure business, but everybody knew that the disease was the plague and cursed the unclean visitors who had brought it. The eight patients lay together in the Gutleuthaus at Schlierbach; six died, and the lives of but two were saved. Those who were cured belonged to the neighboring villages of Schönauf and Petersthal, and after being thoroughly disinfected and supplied with new clothes, they were sent to their homes. For their own sakes the men said nothing about the sickness they had had, since they would otherwise have been received nowhere. But one had concealed his most valuable possessions in a small bundle which he took with him on his return. The other had laid aside the new boots belonging to one of the dead patients and exchanged for them the shoes given him at the Gutleuthaus. At the end of a week the plague burst forth with unprecedented violence in both the villages to which the men had returned. The mother of the Schönauf patient sickened and died first, then the sister who had nursed her, the pastor who had given them the communion, the women who had shrouded the corpses, and finally those who had attended the funerals, which were conducted with the usual lack of precaution. The wretch who had caused all the misfortune of course kept silence. Hastily packing his bundle he went on to Swabia. The course of events in Petersthal was very similar. Residents of both villages went from house to house in Heidelberg selling fruit, vegetables, fir-wood, pine-cones, and straw mats. Suddenly the physicians in all quarters of the city reported fresh cases of plague. General terror

seized the populace. One morning it was known that the court had moved to Mosbach. Great discouragement on the part of the citizens resulted from this inconsiderate step, for which the elector's young wife was blamed. All who could do so followed the example given. Erastus and his colleagues urged the magistrate to adopt energetic measures. Intercourse with the plague-stricken villages was stopped, the universities and schools were closed. The hospital was devoted exclusively to patients who had the plague, and all attacked by the terrible disease were instantly conveyed there. A violent thunder-storm cleared away the foul vapors at the same time that a flood cleansed the pestilent canals, and the contagion at last came under control. The court returned to the castle and Heidelberg again assumed its wonted appearance. But even after the extinction of the actual epidemic an individual here and there became the victim of the fell visitant from which the inhabitants supposed themselves free. The cause of this was the continuation of the pestilence in the neighboring villages which, in the general anxiety to secure the safety of the city, had been neglected. Heart-rending tales were heard, but the efforts of the elector's magistrates were confined to sending food, the strictest quarantine being maintained in all other respects. Whoever wished to go out to render assistance was only permitted to do so by agreeing not to return. At last Erastus succeeded in obtaining an order that the magistrate and several physicians should visit the afflicted villages and carry medicines, clean clothes, and linen. As the magistrate was ill on the day appointed Erastus himself took charge of the commission to examine into the best means of checking the malady. Ten

laborers from the hospital, supplied with axes and spades, followed in a second cart. A third was loaded with wine, provisions, unslaked lime, and all sorts of disinfectants. The physicians found the nearest village silent and apparently deserted. All the roads to the mountains were barricaded and peasants armed with halberds and muskets stood on guard to drive back the people who lived in the valleys. The commissioners obtained a passage for their wagons with great difficulty. In spite of the elector's order the peasants declared they would not allow one of the gentlemen to return through their village as the plague had no respect for royal commands. The party proceeded some distance farther through the deserted valley, now silent as the grave. Here and there some stray animal was grazing on the green pasture. The farm-houses above seemed abandoned. The members of the commission entered one. A hen searching for grain in the court-yard was the only living creature. The doors were broken in, the shutters burst open. Articles which the robbers had been unable to carry off lay scattered around in wild confusion. Farther on the commissioners found a corpse in a field near the road. The unfortunate man lay where death had overtaken him. The physicians shuddered with horror as they gazed at the wild, distorted countenance. "Death caused by poisonous vipers or ferocious blood-hounds seems like an angel of peace compared with that by the plague," said Erastus. At the next farm they saw the owner sitting on a bundle of straw before his door. His face was burning with the flush of inward fever, his eyes glittered deliriously, and he instantly covered them with his hands to protect them from the light.

"Why do you sit here instead of staying in bed?" asked Erastus.

"No one will bring me water."

"Where are your servants?"

"They all ran off."

"Your wife?"

"Dead."

"And have you no one to aid you?"

"They are all dead."

Erastus again placed over his mouth the sponge soaked in vinegar and, with his assistants who took similar precautions, entered the house. The windows were still closed, for the patient had dreaded nothing so much as light. The new-comers hastily opened the shutters to drive out the horrible odors by admitting fresh air. The sun shone into a neat, well-furnished farm-house room. Supper still stood on the table, a proof how swiftly the fell disease had attacked all the members of the family at the same time. A child's catechism and slate lay on the window-sill, ready for use in school. But the wildest confusion reigned in the adjoining chambers. The floor was strewn with rags, bandages, and trampled straw, which showed what a battle had been waged against the plague. Two dead boys, still convulsively embracing each other, lay in one bed. On another Death had flung the corpse of a woman clasping her child, whose tiny waxen hand hung stiffly over the edge. Erastus himself with his assistants' help carried the bodies out of doors. The neighboring houses presented a similar spectacle. The solitary farms had all been robbed. The healthy had fled, the sick had crowded together in the middle of the village, where the houses being near to each other rendered mutual assistance

possible. Everywhere were heard sighs, delirious ravings, death-struggles. The convalescent and those who had the disease in a lighter form moved about dully, in a feverish stupor, performing the most necessary offices. They brought into the village the bread which had been left at a certain spot beyond the boundary, milked the cows, kept up the fires, and removed the corpses when able to do so.

"Where is the burgomaster?" asked Erastus.

"Dead," replied a group of wretched-looking women, some of whom had their sick children hanging around their necks.

"The pastor?"

"His wife became ill, so he went away with his family."

"The schoolmaster?"

"He went with the pastor."

"Who takes care of you then?"

"Nobody."

Under these circumstances it was decided that some of the physicians and all the workmen should remain there for the present, dig a trench for the corpses, purify the houses, and distribute medicines and clothing. Erastus and several others would go on to Schönau to see what was to be done there. A lonely path through the woods led across the crest of a mountain to the little town. Most of the farms located high on the wooded ascent had been spared by the plague, and their occupants drove all visitors away with angry words. The first houses in the place were closely shut, but no traces of violence were visible. So they reached the heart of the little town which had sprung up around the venerable abbey. All was still, but the business of nursing

seemed to be better arranged here. The windows were opened to admit the fresh air, the sick lay in neat beds and had jugs of water beside them. The rooms were clean. Pale-faced children moved to and fro, waiting upon the sufferers. Erastus entered one house to talk with a woman who seemed convalescent. Praising the arrangements made he asked if she was satisfied with the doctor.

"I have no doctor, no one will come to us."

"Then who told you to air the room and put wet cloths on your head?"

"The Heidelberg pastor."

"Who is he?"

The woman shrugged her shoulders and turned her face to the wall. Erastus saw that she did not wish to be disturbed. Outside he met some lads filling pails with water.

"For whom is the water?" he asked.

"For the sick people in the church."

"Have you turned the church into a hospital?"

"Yes."

"Who arranged that?"

"The Heidelberg pastor."

"Where is the burgomaster?"

"Gone."

"And the pastor of Schönau?"

"Dead."

"And the schoolmaster?"

"Gone."

"Why, who keeps order then?"

"The Heidelberg pastor."

Erastus was eager to know the man who, by his own efforts, had accomplished the miracle of restoring

order in a strange parish and organizing it so that there was scarcely anything left for his commission to do. He entered the large Roman church, whose vaulted hall had been transformed into a cool, airy hospital. A long row of patients lay on straw beds with coverlids ranged along the walls. Even here the terrible disease did not belie its character; there were faces which already bore the rigid stamp of death, and others terribly distorted by suffering, fevered men who raved, laughed, or talked in delirious murmurs, convalescents who lay weak and powerless on their couches, and only too many who longed for an end to their tortures. But the sick were carefully tended and protected from the painful light; spite of the number of sufferers, the air was fresh and constantly renewed without letting the patients feel a draught. Quiet women moved gently to and fro supplying every want. The physician's practised eye wandered with satisfaction over the scene before him. In a dark corner of the church he saw a clergyman kneeling beside a dying form; he heard prayers murmured, saw the Catholic sign of the cross with which the priest blessed the patient and shook his head, saying to himself: "Who can it be?"

Then the tall slender figure of the priest rose before him.

"Magister Laurenzano!" cried Erastus in astonishment.

Paul had also recognized the physician and with a somewhat embarrassed manner approached him. "Heaven sends you, Herr Rath!" he exclaimed. "It is really high time for the government to remember us. Please come over into the cloister. I have already tried twice to send messages and reports of what we needed,

but through cowardly fear of the plague neither messengers nor letters were received. Come, come, we shall have aid now."

The sight of this young man, who, giving no thought to his own danger served the sick without adopting any measures of precaution, so shamed Erastus that he secretly slipped his vinegar-soaked sponge into his pocket and followed Laurenzano to the deserted monastery, which had also been converted into a hospital. In the beautiful vaulted refectory the young priest placed a goblet of wine before his companion and pointing to a long row of glasses and medicine-chests said: "I've made my headquarters here."

Erastus expressed his admiration for Paolo's self-sacrificing labor, and added a few forcible epithets condemning the fugitive officials, the heartlessness of members of families who had run away, and the baseness of the hard-hearted population.

"Don't say that," replied Paul, his deep, musical voice thrilling with emotion: "On the contrary, in these days of conflict I have learned that there is far more love among us than I expected to see. I have witnessed proofs of self-sacrifice that made my heart melt, and not alone from the mother to her children or the daughter to her father. Go look at those pale weak women yonder with the fever still lurking in their veins, who nevertheless listen unweariedly for every impatient sigh of the sick."

Erastus interrupted him with an account of the state of affairs he had found in Petersthal.

"It was just the same here," replied Paolo, "but who should be blamed? The elector's officials, no one else. The people only needed direction. Here, too,

they raged against each other out of sheer despair. To restore their confidence, it was merely necessary to tell them that they could help each other, and their apparent brutality and selfishness instantly gave place to the greatest devotion and self-sacrifice. Since everything has been organized, since each one knows that he is employed in a place suited to his powers where he is necessary and indispensable, the people have developed a faithfulness to duty and a trustworthiness that amaze me. I have learned to think better of your countrymen, since I have led them against this most terrible of all foes, than formerly, when I only saw these Schöнау lads occasionally on Sundays loitering on the highway.

"But how have you accomplished this miracle?" asked Erastus.

Paul smiled but made no reply. "We unfortunately lack many necessities," he said. "Our vinegar is out, all the plants that will produce perspiration have been gathered from the mountains; we even need lime to bury with the dead in order to make the exhalations from the earth harmless. We are obliged to use huge fires, which are costly and troublesome."

"You can get all these things from me," replied the physician. "Stop, I have made a list of what we bring," and he drew a paper from his pocket. Paul glanced at it, then turning pale gazed at the characters with a look of sudden terror.

"Did you write this yourself?" he asked as if life and death depended upon the answer.

"Certainly, why do you ask?"

The priest's hand trembled. "Is this your handwriting?" he repeated, gazing anxiously into Erastus' face. The physician could not understand what the

Magister meant. The pallid youth, by a violent effort, regained his self-control. "I will mark what we need," he murmured absently and left the room in evident agitation.

Erastus shook his head as he gazed after his eccentric companion; he had expected Paul to rejoice over the things bestowed on the sick.

Outside the door the young priest with trembling hands again took out the physician's writing and scanned it closely. "There is no doubt!" he murmured, "these are the very characters Pigavetta made me imitate, and the Herr Adam, to whom his dictated note was addressed, was no other than the heretical pastor Adam Neuser. Yet he certainly threw the paper into the street before my eyes. But was it the same?" and with an expression of despair Paul sank down on the sill of the round convent-window and stared gloomily into vacancy. "Does the adder of remorse, which for a time had lain coiled in the darkness, sting again? Does the old chain fret once more?" Should he warn Erastus? He fell into a gloomy reverie, but could form no resolution. At last he roused himself. "Let us think of to-day's trouble. If a new one comes to-morrow, let it bide its time. God's mercy does not allow every poisonous germ our hands have heedlessly scattered to develop, and there is misery enough around me here to enable me to make atonement to many for the sins I have committed against many." With these words he rose to compose his thoughts in his own room for the service he held in the church every evening for the sick.

Erastus, wearied by his long walk, remained for a time in the pleasant hall of the refectory, thinking over his glass of wine of the young man who to-day had in-

spired him with the greatest admiration. At last an old, white-haired peasant woman, with a quiet, placid countenance appeared, carrying a large basket of plants on her head. After she had set down her burden and wiped the perspiration from her forehead she began to select and sort the herbs.

"I suppose you are glad that the Heidelberg pastor came to you, mother?" said Erastus, to begin a conversation.

"Glad?" replied the old dame, "he has saved us."

"Indeed, when we compare the state of affairs in Petersthal with the condition of things here, we must admire the man."

"If you had seen the miracle he performed on the Kreuzwiese,* you would speak very differently."

"What kind of a miracle, mother?"

"You don't know about it," said the old woman eagerly, "why, then you know nothing at all. You ought to have seen how the man tried to persuade the people all day long, and all in vain. Those who were well packed up their clothes, and were going to fly by the foot-paths that were not guarded. Wicked rascals robbed the deserted farm-houses and practised all sorts of cruelties on the defenceless; the sick lay deserted in their chambers, on the highways, in the open fields. Then the stranger-pastor threatened the departing villagers with all the punishments of Heaven, if they gave their parish the slip. The first miracle happened directly after. The ringleader of the fugitives, who behaved the worst, climbed the quarry behind the Sperlingshof

* Meadow of the Cross.

to try to get to a foot-path by which he could reach the road to Leiningen without being caught. Just as he arrived at the top he tripped, fell backward into the quarry and broke his neck. You ought to have seen the pastor as he pointed to the spot and with flashing eyes shouted to the people: 'I tell you, that each of you who treads that path shall perish likewise,' and he began to call upon God to destroy all who wished to leave their brothers to perish and to help all who were ready to aid their fellow-men. Yonder, by the quarry still stands the holy cross the elector wanted to pull down as being an object of idolatry. But the parish resisted because it had been there long before the cloister and is an ancient relic. At last the Holy Virgin and the disciple were broken off and carried away, but the Saviour was allowed to stay on His cross. The stranger-pastor now turned towards Him, and you should have heard how he called upon Him till it was enough to move a stone. Tears streamed down our cheeks. Then he cried out as if in ecstasy: 'Thou wilt, Lord! Give a sign that Thou wilt!' and he stretched both hands towards the Saviour as if he wanted to embrace Him, shouting exultingly: 'See, see, He will!' Then we thought we were dreaming. The stone statue raised its head and arms and bowed thrice, four times. Once it seemed as if the whole sacred form bent towards us. The pastor now turned, and said to us: 'The Lord has said *yes*, whoever still doubts or refuses ought to be burned as a heretic, and I will be the first to light the pile.' You should have seen how still the people were. I did not hear the 'yes' myself, I was too far away, but there were many who distinctly saw the stone statue open its mouth and heard it say 'yes,' like a bridegroom at the altar. The

pastor counted the young men: 'Take spades and dig a trench in the churchyard large enough to hold at least thirty bodies. You,' he said to the older ones, 'carry out the corpses, I will bless them as soon as the grave is made.' Then he turned to the girls: 'You will bring water,' and to the old women: 'You will clean the houses.' Then he selected several men and women: 'You will go with me that we may turn the church into a hospital!' Well, what were we to do? His eyes blazed like two fires and his bearing was that of an elector or apostle. I believe he could have slain with a single word any one who opposed him, as St. Peter killed Ananias. By sunset the village was clean, the sick were carried to the church. Whosoever fell ill was instantly conveyed there unless he could be well cared for at home, and the pastor and elders daily inspected the houses to see that nothing was neglected."

"He is certainly a remarkable man," murmured Erastus.

"He is a Catholic," said the old dame in a low tone. "He gives extreme unction to the dying."

"Are you sure of that?" cried Erastus indignantly.

She nodded assent. "The old faith was better, it could work miracles."

Erastus rose. A single word had changed the admiration he felt for Laurenzano into loathing. "With the old ghost of the Bare-footed Friars and the new Jesuit tricks, he'll restore popery here," said the indignant physician. "That stone idol must be removed as soon as the magistrate will venture out here. We'll teach you to work miracles, make proselytes." Leaving the refectory he went out of doors in an angry mood and heard through the open windows of the church the

words of the evening service Laurenzano was holding for the sick. No well person was permitted to enter, but the people stood in groups outside the open windows to catch the discourse of the idolized pastor. Erastus also approached. He heard Paul explaining to the patients the words of the Epistle of James: "Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful and of tender mercy." The musical, melancholy tones echoed like a soft, soothing melody from the church over the square shaded by the ancient lindens rustling in the evening breeze. "Behold, we count them happy which have endured," said the voice within, "endured to the end. Our portion is sorrow and anxiety, they rest outside in the peace of God; we rack our brains to find a way to build up our happiness anew, they have entered into the rest of the Saints and are safe in the eternal habitations; we must again raise our weary arms for arduous labor, while theirs rest in sweet slumber. A thousand toilsome paths still await our tired feet, theirs rest from the long 'pilgrimage.'" It seemed as if a calmer atmosphere surrounded the sufferers' pallets. The moans of pain ceased, the sounds of impatience died away. "Behold, we count them happy which endure," the preacher continued, "all who have passed out through that portal to the quiet chambers of God have died in the Lord. But we also who are spared for fresh conflicts, count ourselves happy that we have endured, because for the first time we can say with the apostle: 'Whether we live, we live unto the Lord.' The destroying angel of God has come among us like a prophet and said: 'I have a word for you, ye children of men!'

He found you amid your cares, your vexations, your hostilities, your idle thoughts, your coarse pleasures. Then came the terrible angel of the Lord and asked you old people how much value the things about which you were fretting, toiling, disputing, and quarrelling had in the face of death? He asked you maidens of what worth your dress, your finery, your beauty would be, if the angel of the plague should touch you to-morrow with his terrible finger? He struck the goblet from your hands, young men, and silenced your ribald songs. He laid the brother's hand in the sister's, made peace between father and son, between neighbor and kinsman. Therefore we may count ourselves also happy that we were permitted to endure this season of affliction. We will accept our lives from God as a gift which He bestows for the second time; we will now use it as the Giver commands, since we have learned that it is always in His hand and He can recall it at any hour if we misuse it. All we, who have together endured, suffered, hoped, and feared, who have seen our loved ones torn from our hearts and borne to the place from which no one ever returns, placed in the grave which only opens at the blast of the last trump, let us henceforth form but *one* family, and if the old spirit of strife, selfishness, avarice returns, I call upon you before those graves outside, and by this altar which to-day hears your moans of pain, to ask yourselves what value all the things about which you dispute would have, if the angel, whom you have lately seen in his terrible majesty, should return? Then you will live to the Lord, then we shall count you happy that the sight of the holy angel has made you wiser."

A touching prayer followed this discourse. Erastus

was deeply moved. His wrath had vanished. The words he had heard sounded wholly unlike the Magister's former flowery tirades, so rich in antitheses. Then he had played the preacher, this time he had preached. The listeners dispersed. As Erastus was walking slowly down into the little village, Paul overtook him to accompany him on his return. "You have requested the consistory to relieve you from all ecclesiastical duties," said Erastus, "but I see you have become faithless to your purpose."

"I was ill," said Paul, "heart-sick, poor, and wretched. I felt when I made that petition that I no longer had a right to teach others," and a sorrowful smile flitted over his delicate, colorless features. "But when I found that I might accomplish some good by preaching, of course I forgot my own unworthiness. Under such circumstances, it would have been wrong to think of self. And I thank God to-day for having sent me this visitation, which has restored to my withered heart the power to feel for others, to sympathize with others' sufferings. To me this season of affliction has been a great blessing." As Erastus remained silent, Paul continued. "I have also once more convinced myself of the power of the Church to guide the unreasoning multitude. Only by prayer can these demoniacal forces be controlled. Without prayer and preaching, all my sensible advice would have been useless."

"You forget the miracles," said Erastus sharply.

Paul looked at him in surprise.

"Why do you attain your good ends by deception and public jugglery? What of the miracle on the Kreuzwiese?"

The young preacher smiled. "Surely you have

been in Bologna and seen the leaning towers, the Asinella :

As Carisenda's tower
When, *towards the quarter opposite its slope a cloud*
Sweeps by, leans downward towards the traveller,
Who is fain adown another street his way to seek.

While addressing the crowd I noticed this same phenomenon. The clouds, driven by the wind, swept over the blue sky behind the cross, which since the other figures were rudely torn off, slants considerably, so that it really seemed to bow and bend, with a frequency proportioned to the rapidity with which the clouds changed their shape. No one saw it, but when I perceived that the people were deeply moved by the sudden death of a bad fellow who seemed to have broken his neck in consequence of my prediction, the thought darted through my mind that I would strike while the iron was hot. So I made a second miracle speedily follow the first one. You shake your head but, sir, there was no other way of getting the people into my power for their own welfare. If ever a *pia fraus* was allowable it was then."

"You are a Romanist?" said Erastus coldly.

"I am," replied the young priest, apparently increasing in stature as he spoke. "But I shall leave the Palatinate, as soon as matters here are in such a condition that the measures adopted by your magistrates and clergy will suffice." He held out his hand as if for a long farewell.

The physician reluctantly gave him his paralyzed fingers. "May you prosper," he said; but he thought to himself: "After to-day our paths will lie asunder."

As Erastus at a turn in the road glanced back, he saw the young man come out of a house with a child in his arms and leading an older one by the hand. They had probably lost their parents.

CHAPTER XVIII.

ERASTUS found somewhat better order prevailing in Petersthal when he returned there in the evening, but many things were lacking—the four physicians and their twelve assistants had accomplished only half as much as the priest had done unaided in the far more extensive field of labor at Schöнау. The laborers themselves had been obliged to bury the dead and cleanse the streets, the healthy men having all fled. It was useless to think of purifying the infected houses, for the women declared that they were too weak to help. They could neither be induced to give up their beds and clothing to be burned, nor to air and clean their dwellings. Angered and wearied by their fruitless labor, the physicians sat together around a wagon which they had fitted up to afford them quarters for the night. The horses were tied to the trees, and each individual made himself as comfortable as possible. Erastus was still visiting the neighboring houses in order at least to aid the nearest sufferers as much as possible, and not until the darkness rendered farther calling impracticable did the faithful physician seek his narrow cart. Stretching himself wearily at full length he gazed at the glittering stars, whose soft light formed a strange contrast to the suffering around him. Jupiter was shining with quiet

splendor and in the south glowed the crimson light of Mars. "Can your conjunction really have any influence upon death, pestilence, and the plague?" thought the physician, who was usually known as a foe to astrology. Then he too fell asleep, but while in a half doze heard the laborers stealing the provisions and carousing on the wine intended for the sick. Towards morning a loud outcry arose. Some strangers had also gone to the provision cart and tried to quietly drag it away. But two workmen who, contrary to Erastus' orders had slept among the sacks, woke and shouted for help, upon which the vagabond thieves vanished in the darkness. When day dawned the whole party rose with stiffened limbs, confused heads, and irritated tempers. The fruitless negotiations with the demoralized sufferers began afresh. When Erastus saw that he could not accomplish his purpose in this way, he resolved to follow the example that had been set him the day before. Turning his back upon the scolding women he went towards the church, whose steeple beckoned above the trees and houses. The little white village church, surrounded by a crumbling wall, gleamed through the fruit trees amid the wooden crosses and sunken graves. The physician intended to turn it into a hospital, but the small space could accommodate only thirty patients at the utmost. He was obliged to have straw and hay taken from the stables by force, and with these materials the laborers spread a layer of clean litter along the walls of the House of God. Erastus with some of his men then went down to the carts to get sheets and coverlets. When he returned he saw a column of smoke rising from the chapel; an alarm of fire now rang through the quiet village. A peasant, enraged by the

removal of his hay, had set fire to the whole supply and then stolen away unmolested. Extinguishing the flames was not to be thought of. The workmen bursting into savage laughter sat on the wall of the graveyard and watched the little church burn down. "If the people won't be helped," said the doctors, "let them be. When the disease has run its course, it will die out of its own accord." Erastus tried to persuade them to make one more trial by visiting each house in turn. They shrugged their shoulders and left the task to him.

Going to the nearest dwelling to order the inmates to deliver up all infected articles that they might be burned, the benevolent physician encountered nothing but senseless opposition and coarse vituperation. His patience too now gave way, and he declared that he would bestow no more food on those who did not follow his instructions. Then, aided by his laborers, he began to clean the empty farm-houses so that after the task was completed the well might lodge in them instead of in the infected dens in the village. Fires, fed with the straw-beds of the sick, now blazed here and there, and the repulsive odor of burnt linen spread through the valley. But Erastus' own men were already tired of the business. Nothing was done as rapidly as he desired or in the way he had ordered. The laborers, as the peasants had predicted, took advantage of the vacating of the infected houses to practise all sorts of pilfering, and the villagers stood about in groups angrily consulting whether they should not resist the strangers by force. Erastus was at last obliged to silently make the humiliating acknowledgment that without the help of the clergy he could not execute his plans for the

relief of the neglected peasantry. Paul's miracle on the Kreuzwiese appeared to him in a much milder light to-day. So he sat down on a stone by the road-side and wrote a letter to the Magister, entreating him to leave Schönauf for a short time, in order to establish a better condition of affairs in Petersthal. The first words of this petition to the miracle-worker—a very disagreeable measure for Erastus to adopt—ran as follows: "Jurists and physicians abdicate and beg the aid of theologists." When completed it was sent to the cloister by a laborer and the councillor meantime resumed his thankless employment. But the peasants' mood was beginning to be very malevolent. They surrounded the carts in crowds, declaring that the elector had sent these provisions for their relief and that the councillor had no right to withhold them. Several youths and men who had kept out of sight the night before, now appeared among the groups. They were probably the same who had made the nocturnal attack on the provision cart. Erastus was obliged to summon his men from their work to watch the carts. But the physicians were now becoming tired of the business. "Let us give the goods to the obstinate peasants," they said, "and then leave them to their fate." While a violent dispute about the matter was going on among the commissioners themselves, an insolent fellow jumped upon the provision-cart and tore down the canvas cover. The women instantly surrounded it, seizing boxes and bags with greedy hands. Suddenly the trampling of horses' hoofs was heard at the entrance of the village. "The magistrate and four troopers," cried a workman, "he'll know what is to be done." The women screamed; in the twinkling of an eye the crowd scat-

tered and the young men vanished behind the houses. Herr Hartmann Hartmanni, "the cultured magistrate," as he was jeeringly called at the Stag, appeared and sprang from his horse. He was a stately man, but his tall figure was bowed by a dissolute life. Though still young, only a few scanty locks of black hair remained on his head; all the seven deadly sins had left their traces on his haggard countenance. He was cross-eyed, and his limbs no longer obeyed their owner's will. Although the points of his moustache curled fiercely, the corners of his mouth were weak and flabby. For so stern a magistrate, his gestures were somewhat affected—he liked to display the scholarship he owed to the old Heidelberg school of humanists. Herr Hartmann Hartmanni was not fond of work. Instead of performing his duties in the court-house, he preferred to write verses and not infrequently the reports of his examinations were half in rhyme. The elector would have dismissed him long before, but Magistrate Hartmanni of Heidelberg had rendered Frederick III. a great service at the time of Ottheinrich's death, by enabling the impoverished Duke of Simmern to arrive at Heidelberg in time to take possession of his lawful heritage, which Duke Albert of Bavaria was already preparing to grasp. So the elector felt bound by personal obligations, and many a prince in such a situation has adopted the expedient of reorganizing details of government to render harmless a magistrate whom he would not offend. Herr Hartmanni's bad management had inclined Frederick III. to assign police duty to the presbyteries, as the church alone seemed really desirous of punishing sin. The magistrate himself of course favored the Geneva Ban, which would relieve him of part of his troublesome

duties. Such was the character of the person who now appeared on Paul's battle-field among the Schöнау mountains. Half-profligate, half-pedant, he was never pleasing in appearance, but to-day he was as oddly attired as if he had copied Holbein's picture of the plague-doctor. In one hand was a flask of vinegar which he snuffed as soon as the odor of the burnt beds greeted his nostrils; in the other he carried his longest sword, to ward off any peril to his person. If compelled to touch anything, he slipped the vinegar bottle into his pocket and took out a pair of pincers with which he handled every article, though he seemed amply protected by thick leather gloves. Doublet and knee-breeches were stuffed with camomile and peppermint, but not content with that, he had hung around his neck perforated balls containing sponges wet with drugs which exhaled a stupefying odor. His sullen face expressed deadly terror and secret rage at the obnoxious duty allotted to him. His first official act was the arrest of the bold incendiary, who for the present was tied to a tree. Blows and curses from the troopers now compelled the execution of the measures about which the physicians had vainly argued four and twenty hours with the obstinate peasant women. At noon the magistrate held a court of inquiry to learn how the plague had been brought in.—At first the women remained obdurately silent, till at last a young girl whose lack of common-sense was legibly written on her face, pressed forward and like a cackling hen told a confused story. Every evening shortly before the outbreak of the plague a dog with fiery eyes had run through the village snuffing at the houses. Wherever he had stopped, the pestilence broke out a few days later. But this dog was

in reality the herb-woman from the Kreuzgrund, in whose hut he always disappeared. Besides, the plague had stopped at the Kreuzgrund. Not a single person there had died.

"So she is about again," said the magistrate. "There are already a number of accusations against her in my office. She is ready for the stake. Does not her appearance correspond exactly with the story of the mad dog at Ephesus, which Apollonius of Tyana commanded to be stoned to death?" he added turning to Erastus. But the latter wishing to have nothing to do with the affair, went back to his carts. Hartmanni himself set off with two troopers to arrest Mother Sibyl. The girl who had first accused the old woman ran beside them to act as guide. "One may know she is a witch," she said panting for breath, "from her always having butter, though nobody ever saw her churning. She lured Peter away from me, so that he now runs after Saunchen, and she is the cause of my mother's aches and pains too. But there is her house; I'll go no farther, she might do me some new harm."

The herb-woman's hut was in the green wooded valley, whose brook turned the wheels of Werner's mill. The witch's home was a tiny little house with blind windows and walls blackened by age and smoke. The door was closed; a trooper looked through the cracks: "It is empty; she flew up the chimney when she heard us coming," he said.

"Dismount, we must take an inventory," the magistrate commanded. The troopers alighted from their horses and a violent push broke in the door of the old woman's deserted hut. The halberdiers, fearing the magic arts of the escaped witch, made the sign of the

cross as they entered. This was a Catholic custom and it was fortunate for them that the gentlemen of the consistory did not see it, or they would have been dismissed from the service. The room was empty save for a black cat whose green eyes glared from the hearth at the uninvited guests. "Could it be the witch herself?" The sergeant approached: "Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!" he roared, as the animal with a single bound sprang past him and vanished through the open door. Herr Hartmann Hartmanni maintained his composure, but let his troopers precede him that they might first feel the influence of any spell the witch had left behind. He also avoided touching anything and ordered the soldiers to seize whatever required to be confiscated. There was however very little. Over the fireless hearth hung the skin of a fox with other furs that the sorceress was drying there. A box contained some old iron which Herr Hartmann thought looked very much like gallows-nails, and the rope beside it might have been used to hang some criminal. Several brooms leaning against the chimney also seemed to him suspicious. All kinds of flowers and plants were spread out on boards and basket-covers to dry: elder-blossoms, mullein, camomile, linden flowers, and similar herbs, whose properties Mother Sibyl need not have learned from the devil. The disappointed servants of justice looked at each other as if wondering whether this was really like a witch's kitchen. Suddenly the sergeant uttered an exclamation of joy and pointed to a narrow door skilfully concealed with old clothes. Herr Hartmann pressed against it with his sword, and when it yielded ordered the trooper to open it for him. "So this is where she keeps her household goods," he said with sparkling eyes. The men pressed eagerly into

the narrow room. The white skull of a horse stared at them with its hollow eye-sockets from the wall. Scattered about on old potsherds and dishes lay dried wolves' eyes, birds' hearts, owls' feathers and claws. Closely-corked glass bottles contained snakes with dark backs and white bellies, the distended bodies of hideous salamanders, and lizards which peered at the strangers with bright eyes far more intelligent than the human ones that stared back at them. On the window-sill were tiny vials filled with salves, fern-seed, vervain, and magic powders of all kinds. But the article which above all others would best serve to convict the witch was a basket the wicked old creature had evidently hastily put down here after her last walk, just before taking flight, for in it, carefully preserved in rags and boxes, were all sorts of snakes' skeletons, toads' bones, a child's skull, wolves' hair, a little vial of pigeon's blood, and numerous scraps of paper covered with curious written characters, besides a skillet with flint and tinder for brewing witch's broth in the woods. Yet Herr Harmann Hartmanni seemed by no means satisfied. "A very ordinary old hag," he said scornfully, "the whole won't bring fifty thalers, including the house. Take the basket just as it is and the old broken dishes and vermin. The witch has hidden her best tools. I've usually realized a tolerably fair sum of money from the confiscated bowls and trenchers. But Master Jack Ketch will open her mouth and make her tell where the treasures are, when we catch her."

"She won't let herself be caught," said a trooper. "She has now gone farther on with the plague and Heaven knows what form she has taken or whether she won't visit us to-night in the shape of a nightmare."

"The plague take it," said the terrified magistrate.

"I think it would be better to leave her property untouched," the trooper continued. "One can never tell how she will avenge herself. The magistrate of Mosbach after confiscating a witch's rubbish went quietly to bed, supposing his own dear wife was already lying there; suddenly he saw it was the witch, who wrenching his leg out of the socket and doing him other injuries, vanished up the chimney. The next morning all he had taken from her had disappeared, though it had been put carefully under lock and key. I vote that we leave everything just as it is."

The magistrate turned pale. "A seal can be put on," he murmured. At this moment a tall, dark figure appeared in the door-way.

"The Saints preserve us!" cried the sergeant.

"Holy Martin!" faltered the magistrate spite of his Protestant faith.

"Is not Councillor Erastus here?" asked the musical voice of Magister Laurenzano.

"Oh, is it you, Magister," said the magistrate with a lighter heart. "You will find him in the village, but can you tell us where to look for the old witch who inhabits this den?"

"Of what is she guilty?" asked Paul.

"There are strong proofs that it was she who caused the plague," replied the magistrate pathetically. Seeing the Magister turn pale, Herr Hartmann raised his arm with a tragic gesture. The sight of the learned and famous pulpit orator inspired him. "Not in vain," he commenced his declamation, "does the wicked old woman bear the name of Sibyl. She has gathered by the Linsenteich the plants whose sap, as Pliny tells

us, infuse corruption through all the veins of life. By the White Stone, where tangled thorns and thistles bar any access, by marshy, alder-shaded springs, on all the desolate moorlands, amid the reeds and rushes of the Kimmelsbach, in short everywhere that the foot of man seldom treads she was seen stealing about, luring the toads and talking with the will o' the wisps. Amid the ruins of the Heiligenberg where adders writhe, and on the silent wooded mountain ridges where only the mountain-cock bore her company, she has been seen dividing with hazel-rods the impalpable kingdom of the air, calling down hail, and muttering formulas of conjuration while cowering in the dust. She poisoned the brook at its source, that it might bear the pestilence down into the valley and, transformed into a dog, spat poisonous froth in the dusky evening hours upon the thresholds of the houses within whose precincts the plague is proved to have first broken out. Look at the devil's household utensils," and he dashed the cover from the witch's wares he had seized. "Behold the black and white wand of Circe," he added, taking a half-peeled hazel-rod from the corner and handing it to the young priest, whose dilated eyes were glowing with a gloomy fire at the tale of this abomination. "Look here," continued the magistrate, becoming more and more excited by his own words, "see the hellish distillations she collected, drop by drop, from the stalks and roots of plants, see how she bottled night dew and toad's venom to sprinkle upon innocent children, look at the caldron where she brewed poisonous vapors, which rising to the clouds fell back to earth again as the germs of pestilence, and behold how this beautiful green wooded valley has already withered under the witch's breath."

Paul Laurenzano had grown white with passionate emotion, his hurried breathing was distinctly audible and the old fanatical enthusiasm blazed in his dark eyes. "I think I know with whom she is hiding," he said in a trembling voice. "Come, I will guide you."

The magistrate walked deferentially beside the young preacher. The soldiers, leading Hartmanni's horse, followed at some little distance. After a short walk, the Magister left the road and followed a mill-race leading from the brook. "The report that the old witch caused the plague has spread through Schönau too, and as she was not safe in her own house the old Baptist, Miller Werner, has sheltered her," said Laurenzano. Beyond the green orchard, shaded by poplars and alders, the mill, a symbol of peace, appeared before the party of pursuers. The window-shutters in front were closed, but the clapping wheels unweariedly applauded night and day the man who even in these trying times had not ceased working, but made bread from the freshly garnered harvest for the starving inhabitants of the valley. The noise of the wheels had prevented the inmates of the mill from hearing the soldiers' arrival, so the magistrate rapped rudely with the hilt of his sword upon the closed shutters.

"Don't break my windows, you disturber of the peace," called old Werner's voice from within: "Is that the way you ask for bread?" The shutter flew open and the Baptist's weather-beaten face and grey head appeared. Surprised, but fearless, he scanned the group before his house, while his son's red head, powdered with flour like the pistils of a tiger-lily, peered inquisitively behind him to see what was going to happen? But ere Werner could give utterance to his astonishment the

magistrate said: "You are sheltering the old witch from the Kreuzgrund. Give her up, or you'll go to the square tower which you know so well."

"Of what is she accused?" replied the old miller quietly.

"Of causing the plague," answered Herr Hartmann Hartmanni with gravity.

"And do you, the elector's magistrate, believe that one old woman could have worked all this misery which the united officials of the government could not stay? Then, sir, don't lay hands on her or she might harm you by some evil spell."

"So you confess that she is in your house?" asked the magistrate.

The Baptist made a sign towards the back room and his red-haired son vanished through the door opening within. Instead of answering Herr Hartmanni, Werner then said:

"It is strange, we have vainly waited whole weeks for the elector's officials to stay this scourge. My provisions are exhausted, my faithful Martha is worn to a shadow by running, nursing, and watching, but the magistracy left us to die and rot. Now that the pestilence is nearly over, soldiers and wagons come for one old woman who is said to be guilty of all the mischief." Herr Hartmann Hartmanni was somewhat confused by this unexpected address, but a tremendous uproar behind the house spared him the necessity of answering. Strange crowing, rattling, grunting noises echoed from a hay-stack a short distance off. The sergeant's horse leaped clattering over the garden-fence and the gigantic rider lay stretched upon the ground. The other trooper swore and shouted as he strove to hold Herr Hart-

manni's plunging steed by the bridle without letting his own bolt. The priest sprang forward to discover the cause of the confusion. Just at that moment an old woman, trying to escape by the road leading up the mountain, ran across his path. He seized her, and the sergeant who had been thrown from the saddle rose from the ground and grasped her arm. "Devil's witch, we'll make you pay for this disturbance," he shouted furiously.

At the same instant loud blows and screams of pain were heard behind the house. "He who won't hear must feel, foolish boy," cried the miller's angry voice. "How often I have told you to stop these deviltries. Now you have made this a bad business." Both groups met in front of the house, the irate miller dragging his shrieking son by the ear, the pastor and the sergeant pulling along the witch who let her feet trail on the ground and howled like an infuriated wild beast.

"Didn't I sell you the snake!" she cried every now and then to Laurenzano. "Then let me go. You need serpents, too, if you practise witchcraft."

At this shocking spectacle the miller released his son. "Shame on you, to abuse an old woman so," he exclaimed, "especially you, a priest."

"Witches and heretics lodge together, that is their old custom," replied the Magister angrily, while the sergeant and trooper bound the old woman and flung her on the ground.

"You have given refuge to the witch," Herr Hartmann Hartmanni now began, "we have heard with our own ears on your premises the neighing of the impish throng that, with horns, tails, and claws, dashed close by the sergeant as he lay on the earth."

"You see what mischief you have done, George," interrupted the miller, seizing his son by the arm again and shaking him. "It was he who imitated the fiendish voices to enjoy your fright; no other devils are to be found in my house. You will make yourselves ridiculous, if people learn that you allow yourselves to be fooled by a child."

Herr Hartmann Hartmanni turned with a dignified air to red-headed George, who not understanding the danger of the situation was standing bashfully by the garden-fence. "Then he will also go with me to Heidelberg, and if not found guilty of diabolical arts will receive his *quantum satis* with the hazel-rod for contempt of the magistrate of the district."

"Surely you will not imprison a mere lad in the witch's tower on account of a boyish prank for which he has already been punished?" said the miller. "What will become of the child in that horrible prison, he will be frightened to death."

"You will bear him company," broke in the priest. "Herr Hartmanni, I accuse this Baptist and heretic of intriguing for his sect contrary to the elector's commands. He has recently taken advantage of the panic caused by the plague and has also administered the second baptism to several families in Schönau. Besides, you are yourself a witness that he holds intercourse with the witch who is to be met on all the cross-roads."

The miller drew himself up to his full height. "And do you, priest of Baal, dare talk of cross-roads!" he cried in furious wrath. "Who makes appointments to meet innocent maidens at sunset on cross-roads, aye the most notorious ones in the whole region, where evil spirits and evil desires have their haunts." Then thrust-

ing his son forward again, he exclaimed: "Here, look closer at this boy, to whom you gave your foul message."

Paolo turning deadly pale retreated a step. If in good society all his clothing had suddenly dropped from his limbs, he would scarcely have been more shocked than he was now as the consciousness of moral nakedness overpowered him. A painful pause ensued, the more crushing to the young priest because the circle of listeners had long since widened. Attracted by the noise the Heidelberg physicians, the laborers, and numerous peasant-women had flocked to the spot. All eyes were fixed intently on Paul's lips, awaiting his answer to so grave a charge. But he was silent. He felt as if he had suddenly become transparent and mocking eyes were gazing from every direction at his unsavory secrets.

The witch on the ground giggled spitefully. "It was he who lured Herr Erastus's little golden-haired daughter to the Holtermann one dark night."

"What are you saying about my daughter?" cried Erastus in horror, approaching the old woman.

"Well, the Herr Rath probably knows best where his little daughter sprained her dainty foot. The pastor wanted to marry her 'on the cross-roads, where the Evil One nightly visits his sweetheart. But others got ahead of the gentleman, and the little bride jumped into the Pagan's Hole, which was too wet a bridal-chamber for Master Preacher."

"Do keep quiet, you old dragon," the miller had whispered, pushing the prostrate figure with his foot, but she only shouted her strange tale louder than ever. Erastus's features became strangely distorted as he laughed from sheer excitement. With his bristling light

hair and dark face, in which the whites of the eyes gleamed in strange contrast to the swarthy skin, he really looked in his terrible anguish like the devil himself, as his enemies had said. The craven-hearted magistrate retreated in terror. Among what sort of people had he come! He had long known that Erastus was a heretic; now his daughter proved to be a witch; he himself perhaps a wizard; at this moment the uncanny man certainly looked exactly like one. Then the foreign pastor whom Herr Hartmanni had never trusted and who, as he had just learned, bought witches' wares, talked with the Evil One at the cross-roads, and lured young girls to his nocturnal revels. Besides, there was the Baptist with his impish boy, and the fettered witch herself who glared at the magistrate with evil eyes. All who were here ought to go the witch's tower on the rampart, but for this he required an order from the elector. Moreover he must come back into the valley with at least half a company of arquebusiers to uproot heresy and witchcraft. So without speaking a word he mounted his horse and rode out of range of his unpleasant neighbors, and then shouted: "The examination can be made in Heidelberg, my business here is over. Sergeant, take the witch and the incendiary to the tower." Then he set spurs to his horse, ordered the troopers in the village to follow him and trotted as fast as he could down the valley, still full of terror lest the whole conventicle of witches and wizards should pursue him. The sergeant and the remaining trooper fastened the witch between their horses and made her run along with them. On reaching the village, she was put in a cart with the fettered peasant and conveyed to the tower of torture. The miller, seizing his son

by the arm, instantly went into the house to join Martha.

Erastus remained outside. Advancing close to the young priest, who still leaned silently against the trunk of an old pear tree, the wretched father said hoarsely: "Is the witch's story true, Magister Laurenzano?" Paolo made no reply, but fixed his eyes on the ground as if utterly overwhelmed. "Did you lure Lydia to the Holtermann at night?" the physician shrieked in wild anxiety. The wan priest bent his head in assent, and Erastus's tall figure fell prostrate on the earth. His companions sprang forward and carried him to one of the wagons, while Laurenzano, covering his face with his hands, stole away.

Silence again reigned outside the miller's house. The frightened hens ran restlessly to and fro over the trampled grass. The mill-wheel monotonously clanked its old melody, and the brook danced downward as merrily as before in the golden noon-day sunshine, while bright butterflies and dark-hued dragon-flies hovered over its rippling wavelets. But from within the mill came the sound of a woman's passionate weeping. After a time Werner and his son, each with a small bundle on his back, appeared at the edge of the woods. The miller knew what to expect when Herr Hartmann Hartmanni returned and was going to the nearest frontier. Red-haired George on the contrary did not seem to take the matter very seriously, but slouched carelessly behind his angry parent. "Don't run so fast, father," he panted, "the Heidelberg policemen always come too late."

CHAPTER XIX.

WHILE the cart was rolling slowly along the valley of the Neckar Erastus gradually regained his composure. The image of his daughter, in all her goodness and purity, rose before his mental vision. The innocent child might have been led astray, but she had not fallen into sin. The dejected father recalled every conversation the young priest had had with her in his presence, and the conviction returned that his child's soul was still pure and unsullied, whatever might have been the cause of her strange nocturnal excursion. So he urged his companions to drive faster, for he longed to talk with Lydia face to face. The vehicle rolled swiftly through the streets of the city, though it toiled up the steep road to the castle far too slowly for Erastus's impatience. But when the driver tried to cross the drawbridge he found the entrance barred. A cart escorted by four troopers was just passing into the court-yard and in it, by the side of one of the elector's halberdiers, the expastor Adam Neuser sat with fettered hands, staring gloomily into vacancy. His hair had grown somewhat greyer, his skin a little browner, otherwise the privations of his flight seemed to have agreed with him better than his riotous life at the Stag. He had wandered far about the world, but destitute of recommendations, testimonials, or name, could obtain no position. Fortune had deserted him. Completely disheartened, with body, soul, and garments reduced to the lowest estate and only a few farthings in his pocket, he chanced to spend

the night at a tavern on the Danube, where he sat by the hearth in the room next to the one occupied by the innkeeper's children. As the warmth of the kitchen stole pleasantly over his stiffened limbs, and he listened to the prattle of the children, an intense longing for his own family seized upon him. He fancied that his wife had brought him the baby, which in its little woollen blanket felt as warm as the chimney against which he leaned, and the little one rested its head on its father's cheek and licked it as if seeking the nourishment from him it obtained from its mother. Then he saw toddling before him his second little girl, who was just beginning to talk and who called all four-footed creatures from a horse downwards "wau," all winged things from the flies in the room upwards "bibi," and human beings "man." And his boy Hans brought him his slate with the exercises he had written, and the butterflies he had caught in the garden. Deep emotion seized upon the stout pastor, he closed his eyes, as the hens do, by raising the under lid while the upper one remained stationary, as was his habit whenever he was touched by any tender feeling, and fell asleep. But in his dreams he imagined himself seated in his comfortable chair at the round table of the Stag, and Chancellor Probus congratulated him pleasantly on his return. "Everything is forgiven and forgotten. That is a matter of course," he distinctly heard the loud voice of the presiding officer say. These words from the honorable gentleman filled Herr Neuser with so much joy that he awoke, exclaiming with Doctor Luther at Coburg: "Home, home, home!" He relied upon his wife's having burned the dangerous papers in time, did not even think of the crazy memorial written while drunk to Sultan Selim II., and with his natural

heedlessness believed that even in the worst case he would escape with a trifling punishment. So he gave himself up to the magistrate at Amberg, who instantly sent him to Heidelberg, where the trial of his colleagues was still pending. Erastus was glad that Neuser did not see him ; he was in no mood to greet the reckless man who had brought misfortune on his family and himself. But the gate still remained barred, and Erastus was chafing with impatience at the prolonged delay. At last the tramp of hoofs and rattle of wheels were heard in the gateway, and another cart containing a prisoner escorted by armed men appeared. This time however it was Sylvanus who sat beside the trooper. The once stately man looked pale and thin, his eyes were sunken and an expression of quiet despair rested on his pallid face. Between his knees was his little nine year old son, who by permission of the kind-hearted elector had been allowed to bear him company in prison, though the court-preachers had declaimed violently against this soul-destroying indulgence. The prisoner was being taken to Mannheim to prevent any intercourse between him and Neuser. Perceiving Erastus, Sylvanus stretched out his hands towards him as if imploring assistance. The physician also raised his hand, but let it fall feebly again to express how powerless he himself was in this trouble. He was still seeking some words of consolation when the driver lashed the horses and the vehicle rolled through the dark gateway. As soon as Erastus reached home he asked for Lydia. Not expecting her father until later, she had gone to see Frau Belier, but might return at any moment.

Erastus's eye fell upon a large letter that was lying among his papers. It bore the seal of the consistory,

but was addressed to him simply by his title as a doctor of medicine. Much surprised, he broke it open expecting some fresh annoyance. The youthful President Zuleger curtly informed him that the consistory had found it advisable to excommunicate him, a step for which his own conscience would probably assign ample reasons. "No Pope who at any time formulated the Church's ban ever did it with more self-complacency," muttered Erastus, grinding his teeth. The letter also stated that his attendance at the meetings of the consistory would be forbidden until he could again be admitted to the communion table. Trembling with wrath and excitement, he grasped the paper in his lame right hand, seized his hat with the other, and said to frightened Barbara: "I must go to the Prince at once." The anxious old woman tried to induce him to eat, but he rushed out, merely leaving a message for Lydia to wait for him at home, as he had something important to say to her.

The elector was in his private room in the new palace; which has already been described, when Erastus requested the page in waiting to ask an audience for him. The worn-out physician heard the prince talking loudly and earnestly within. After a time the magistrate Hartmann Hartmanni appeared in the door-way and with a sullen air walked past him. Erastus was now permitted to enter.

"I should have sent for you this afternoon," said the stout sovereign kindly, "as it is not my custom to condemn any one unheard. Sit down, what we have to discuss cannot be settled in an hour."

The wearied physician sullenly dropped into the chair offered him. "The report of the theological

members of the consistory concerning the Arian clergymen has been received," the elector began. "I should like to know your opinion of it before passing on to your own affairs."

"The divines have not considered it necessary to send me a copy," replied Erastus coldly.

"Were you not present at the meeting when the earlier reports of the investigation were received?"

"What advantage would that have been to me?" answered Erastus bitterly. "There are three kinds of Councillors in Your Highness's consistory. The jurists who read the documents and report their contents. The learned doctors who do not read them yet report on them, and the theologians who read them and report something very different from what is written in them. When I perceived this I stayed away."

"Your old song," muttered the elector peevishly. "Now I shall probably be obliged to lecture you, instead of you me. Firstly," he continued, turning the pages of the report in question, "the gentlemen impress it upon me that whosoever acquits an ungodly man is just as great an abomination to God as the ungodly man himself." Erastus shrugged his shoulders contemptuously. "The first part relates to the blasphemy, abuse, and desertion of the Christian faith by these clergymen and their attempt to join the Turks. Moreover, all the points in Sylvanus's libel are enumerated, from which it appears that the Inspector intended to befoul the world with his blasphemies. Are you of a different opinion?"

"No," replied Erastus, "Sylvan's libel deserves punishment. But I cannot possibly believe that Neuser's absurd letter to the Turks had any serious meaning, especially as *potest omitti* is written on the margin. I

think the heedless man wrote the letter while drunk, and when he read it again after he was sober was too lazy to burn the paper and therefore wrote: not to be sent. But Sylvanus has suffered bitterly during his long imprisonment and most sincerely repents his error. Of course, neither should go unpunished; the only question is what punishment these gentlemen wish to mete out to them."

"That is just the point," said the elector sorrowfully. "These learned divines always judge according to the divine law as it is written in the Book of Moses. There it is commanded that such blasphemers shall be stoned, cut to pieces, burned. It is clearly stated in the 13th chapter of Deuteronomy: 'If thy brother, the son of thy mother, or thy son, or thy daughter, or the wife of thy bosom, or thy friend, which is as thine own soul, entice thee secretly, saying, Let us go and serve other gods, which thou hast not known, thou, nor thy fathers.

"Thou shalt not consent unto him, nor hearken unto him; neither shalt thine eye pity him, neither shalt thou spare, neither shalt thou conceal him.

"But thou shalt surely kill him; thine hand shall be first upon him to put him to death, and afterwards the hand of all the people.

"And thou shalt stone him with stones, that he die; because he hath sought to thrust thee away from the Lord thy God.'"

The elector laid down the report and gazed earnestly at Erastus.

"Do these gentlemen really wish to introduce stoning into the Palatinate?" asked Erastus scornfully.

"No," replied the elector. "The report says farther: 'It is certain that Christian magistrates at the present

day are not bound to this special *circumstantia* or detail, that is, stoning, but may use the sword, hanging, or other means of destroying life. But if the sin is not visited upon the heads of those who have transgressed, God will pour out his wrath upon the whole nation that has not rooted out the sinners. But to increase and hasten the wrath of God, which as the outbreak of the plague shows is already kindled, would be the most barbarous inhumanity to the whole Christian community.'"

"To sit quietly in the lofty rooms of the government offices and offer a sacrifice to the angel of the plague from the green-covered table is certainly far easier than to battle with him by sick-beds and fumigate his dens," said Erastus bitterly. "But I think Your Highness need feel no anxiety. Our God is not so revengeful as these devout theologians."

"Yes, yes, that is true," sighed the elector. "But the gentlemen say farther that God, 13th chapter of Deuteronomy, commands that all the inhabitants of a city who have turned from God shall be slain, even to the little children, and those who prophesy falsely shall be rooted out, whether they mend their ways or not?"

"Noble, noble," said Erastus angrily. "Then Pius IV. was indeed right when he butchered four thousand Waldenses in Calabria and destroyed their villages, trees and vineyards. The Duke of Guise was right when he shot women and children at Vassy. The Jesuit Possevin was right when he led two thousand arquebusiers against the Protestants in Piedmont. Verily it is so written. Oh, out upon the fools!"

"Certainly," replied the elector. "What difference would there be between me and these blood-thirsty men in Paris and Madrid, if I should follow such counsels?"

They write that they should themselves be responsible for the wrath of God, which is already kindled, if they spared the temporal lives of the blasphemers and by a godless compassion suffered the honor of God, which has been trampled under foot by such numerous, varied, and execrable blasphemies, to remain unavenged. It is very easy for them to talk. They don't know what it is to dip one's pen in ink and extinguish a human life with one's own signature."

"Your Highness' Christian conscience is far more precious to me than the wisdom of the consistory and all the faculties. I trust God will keep both your heart and conscience steadfast. But what has Your Highness determined upon?"

"The matter is not yet ready for sentence," replied the elector. "I shall ask my brother in Dresden, and the theologians in Zurich to examine the report of the trial, that there may be judges to investigate the case who cannot be suspected of personal enmity towards the accused. We followers of Calvin ought not to be more blood-thirsty in matters pertaining to the general faith than the adherents of Luther and Zwingli, but neither must we be more lax than they."

Erastus bowed assent.

"The theologians also demand that a codicil be added to the inquiry," the perplexed elector continued. "Sylvanus, in his letters to the Transylvanians, has mentioned numerous associates with similar views who would go thither, and Neuser does the same in his letter to the Sultan. On being asked at the examination who these associates were, Sylvanus named Neuser and Neuser Sylvanus. In the same way Vehe named Suter and Suter Vehe. The members of the consistory there-

fore think that these matters call for examination by torture."

"That is," cried Erastus furiously, "the prisoners are to be racked until they accuse as fellow-criminals all who stand in Herr Olevianus's way. Has the rascally scoundrel a scriptural warrant for this too?"

"Certainly," replied the elector, again taking up the report. "The Lord commands, Deuteronomy 13th chapter, 14th verse: *Tunc inquires, investigabis ac interrogabis diligenter*. That is: 'Then shalt thou inquire, and make search, and ask diligently.' God commands this diligent and exact investigation, that the magistrates may not wink at such an evil, nor grow negligent, heedless, and sluggish. Therefore, in this matter, to avoid offence it is not enough for the prisoners to confess their crimes, they must also be *forced* to name their accomplices. And since God has not commanded such diligence in the *inquaestio* with *one* word only but urges it with *three*, saying: *inquires, investigabis ac interrogabis diligenter*, it is certain that magistrates who accepted the wicked falsehoods of the prisoners, would be acting very negligently." The elector laid the documents down.

"Shameful!" exclaimed Erastus.

"Calm yourself," said the prince. "In this case torturing could only render the mischief worse. I shall not allow it."

"May God reward you, my gracious sovereign, for making the counsel of the evil-doers of no effect."

"Justice must be done to both sides," said the elector thoughtfully. "What I have now to say will perhaps meet with less approval from you." While speaking he took up another bundle of papers and his brow

clouded angrily. "The consistory here informs me that it has been compelled to pronounce excommunication upon you, which as an ecclesiastical court it has authority to do, according to the power Christ has bestowed upon the Church, even without the consent of the sovereign of the country or against himself in person."

"The Church," cried Erastus. "How long have a few members of the consistory, appointed by the sovereign, constituted the Church?"

"We will let that pass now," answered the elector. "At present the point in question is the motive for this step. Here is Doctor Pigavetta's report accusing you of being the real head of the Arian conspiracy."

"Pigavetta!" cried Erastus.

"Calm yourself; if I doubted you, you would not be sitting here, but in the thick tower. The facts the Italian doctor alleges are of little consequence. That you often walked and drove to Ladenburg with Xylander, that Sylvanus as he was being brought in here begged you to warn Neuser, that you have everywhere taken under your protection and defended the imprisoned blasphemers, proves nothing to me. But here is the positive assertion that you took charge of Neuser's papers and are keeping them concealed in your rooms because the castle itself would be least likely to be suspected." The elector paused.

"Will Your Highness order my home to be searched from one end to the other; if one line of Neuser's is found in my possession, let me be beheaded," said Erastus coldly.

"I am sorry for your position, but I could not spare you this without drawing upon myself the reproach of

partiality." The prince rapped on the table to summon a page and ordered Magistrate Hartmann Hartmanni to be admitted. The latter, carrying a packet of papers under his arm, instantly appeared in the door-way. It was evident from his words that he had already performed his commission while Erastus was detained by his audience with the elector. The astonished physician gazed intently at his sovereign. This proceeding behind his back showed how low he had already fallen.

"Have you finished the search through my councillor's papers?" asked the elector.

"No great search was necessary," replied Herr Hartmanni; "Neuser's letters were lying on the top."

"What!" cried the elector and Erastus in the same breath. The magistrate handed several papers to the prince.

"May the plague take it!" cried Frederick the Pious, looking at Erastus with flashing eyes.

The latter pressed forward and turned the papers over with trembling hands. "A letter from Neuser to Blandrata, one from the Transylvanian envoy Beckhess, letters from Superintendent Davidis in Klausenburg, letters from Vehe, Sylvanus, Suter. . . ." He flung the package angrily on the table. "I know nothing about these papers. A rascally trick to ruin me! Where did you find them, Herr Hartmanni?"

"In your desk."

The elector gazed intently at Erastus as if he wished to read the inmost depths of his soul. "Remember, Your Highness," said the physician "that for months the builders' scaffolding has been in front of my windows, and that any one who chooses to do so can enter my apartments."

The elector seemed to struggle with his feelings for a time, then he asked: "Have you discovered anything else?"

The magistrate smiled scornfully and gave Erastus a letter. "Is this your handwriting, Herr Rath?"

Erastus glanced at it. "Yes."

"Well, most gracious sovereign," said the magistrate, "this letter was also lying among Neuser's papers. Hear what the councillor wrote to the conspirator:

"Dear Herr Adam:

"I have received your letter and am entirely agreed. Matters are in an admirable condition; you shall have the desired passport to-morrow, then follow my instructions exactly in everything and remember me to the Inspector. Your friend!' Will your Highness now believe that a conspiracy of the Arians exists in your own country, to lead the Palatinate to Talmudism and Mohammedanism?"

"Did you write this, Erastus?" asked the elector.

The exhausted man trembled from head to foot, the words seemed choked in his throat as he answered: "I have never written to Neuser, at least so far as I can remember. . . . He never asked me for credentials and I never promised him any."

"Not even last summer, when Neuser used his vacation in trying to secure a position in Transylvania?" asked the magistrate.

"I know nothing about it. The letter is forged."

"Then these must be forged too," replied Hartmanni scornfully, handing another bundle of papers to the physician. Erastus examined them and turned pale.

"These are Bullinger's letters to me, if you have not mixed forged ones with them," he said.

The magistrate turned to the elector. "These letters from the Zurich theologian show how spitefully and malignantly the Herr Rath was in the habit of speaking to strangers about the consistory of the Palatinate, of which he was himself a member."

"To strangers?" Erastus answered: "I think I have daily said to my sovereign the same things that I wrote to Bullinger."

The elector looked wrathfully at him. "That does not excuse your treachery. You have no occasion to slander my councillors to the Swiss. What more?" he continued, turning to the magistrate.

"I found nothing else among the physician's papers, but in one of Jungfrau Lydia's kerchief-pouches was this note, in which some unknown person requests her to meet him in the evening on the lonely Holtermann, because he has important disclosures to make to her about her father." Erastus hastily snatched the note. His brain whirled. So this was the secret errand on which Lydia had sprained her foot. Into what terrible hands might his child fall?

"What did the young lady say about the note?" asked the elector coldly.

"She declines to give any explanation until she has talked with her father."

The elector laughed scornfully. At the sound Erastus fell senseless on the floor. Actively busy all the preceding day, deprived of his night's rest, worried from the earliest dawn, fasting, and a prey to the most agitating emotions, the fragile physician succumbed to anger, exhaustion, and indignation far more than to fear.

"The best confession," said the elector gloomily.

"Take him to the tower, but treat him leniently. He has rendered great services to me and the Palatinate; may God have pity on him for seeking to undo them now."

"And Your Highness will not yet permit torture to be applied to the openly impenitent prisoners, who maliciously withhold the truth from the authorities?"

"I will no longer oppose the course of the trial," said Frederick sadly. "Do nothing harsh without the most absolute necessity. But I want light in this darkness. If that man has deceived me, in whom can I trust?"

The sovereign, wearing an expression of the deepest sorrow, left the room and the magistrate summoned from the ante-chamber several pages who raised the fainting Erastus and sprinkled water over him till he revived. But the unfortunate man only opened his eyes to find himself on the way to the thick tower. All the inmates of the castle who saw his ghastly face as he staggered across the court-yard supported by two halberdiers, were filled with horror.

"Surely no one but a convicted criminal could look so utterly crushed. The consciousness of his treason was written on his face," said Bachmann, who had always been numbered among the physician's friends. "I have never seen such an image of an evil conscience. Men are feeble creatures," he said consolingly to old Barbara, who came wailing out of her door, "and the devil always tempts the best ones the most sorely."

"Oh, how shall I tell my young mistress!" cried the old woman. "The searching of the house has almost killed her."

CHAPTER XX.

WHEN Lydia on the momentous day of her father's arrest returned from her visit to Frau Belier, who had detained her a long time with her loquacious talk, she found the old maid-servant weeping in the ante-chamber. "The magistrate and one of his constables were in the Herr Rath's rooms," sobbed Barbara, "opening all his drawers and boxes, rummaging among his papers, and taking away whatever they chose." Lydia, surprised and indignant, entered and asked the magistrate what this proceeding meant. Herr Hartmanni soothed her with pretty compliments, from which he afterwards advanced to coarse familiarities. The young girl angrily pushed the bold wretch away as he insolently stroked her cheek, murmuring something about Berenice's golden locks. But he laughed sneeringly: "We shall become better acquainted, my little dove, we shall look into all this thoroughly. Ha! ha! ha! Only don't be so prudish. Ha! ha! ha!" Lydia turned her back upon him and went into the next room to watch for her father. But the magistrate followed her there, regretting that he was compelled to search her girlish possessions.

"Search wherever you choose," said the indignant girl.

The next instant he was fumbling for the pouch she wore around her waist. Lydia started back but the bag remained in his hands. At that moment she remembered that it contained Laurenzano's fatal request for a meeting. Oh! why had she not destroyed the unlucky

note? With the courage of despair the terrified girl rushed upon the insolent intruder to wrest her property from him, but he was already holding the sheet high aloft and reading its contents with malicious eagerness.

"Aha, on the Holtermann! Now the coy young miss must sing a different tune," he cried with a jeering laugh, and while Lydia burst into tears the scoundrel gathered up the papers and glancing triumphantly at her quitted the place, leaving Lydia utterly crushed.

Her heart throbbed with breathless anxiety as she waited at the window for her father's return from his audience with the elector. No one else could advise her in this trouble and compel the impudent official to restore her letter. Each moment seemed an eternity. At last after long hours of torture her father came out of the gateway of the new palace. But how! With wild eyes and disordered hair, supported by two guards, and looking like a corpse. The frightened girl felt like springing out of the window to reach her beloved parent. She darted down the stairs to see him once more ere he was snatched from her, but before arriving at the end of the second flight realized that she could not overtake him. When she stood breathless in the court-yard he had already disappeared, and she loudly called her lost father, like a child astray in the woods. The neighbors gazed compassionately from their windows at the weeping girl who was the darling of the whole castle. It seemed as if even the stone statues of the stately pile looked pityingly down upon her. In the midst of her distress Felix approached. At this moment the artist seemed to Lydia like a messenger from God Himself and she shed on his breast the first tears that brought relief. "I will bring your father back

to you," said Felix, "if I have to dig him out of the thick tower with this dagger," and Clytia gazed trustfully at the strong, resolute man.

But a rude hand was laid on her shoulder — Herr Hartmanni ordered her to follow him to the witch's tower.

"Whoever lays hands on my betrothed bride is a dead man!" cried the Italian, placing himself in front of Lydia, but he had scarcely attempted to draw his dagger ere he was lying on the stone pavement by the stairs. The cowardly magistrate had wisely issued orders to have a strict watch kept on the artist. A treacherous blow from a halberdier hurled Felix backward and when he recovered his senses he found himself by the well, with Bachmann and Barbara bathing a deep cut in the back of his head. "Where is Lydia?" asked the architect in a feeble voice.

Barbara sobbed and Bachmann answered for her: "Do not ask, there is no return from the place where she is."

Felix had scarcely understood the words ere consciousness and energy returned. He ordered a wet bandage to be tied over his wound and instantly went to the palace to prefer his complaint to the elector. But the page returned with the answer that he must apply to Herr Hartmanni. Once more he begged to be admitted, saying that he had not come to complain of the injury inflicted on himself, but to ask the restoration of his betrothed bride; but the attendants refused to announce his name a second time, and when he tried to force his way in the soldiers presented their halberds. He went back to the court-yard in a stupefied condition. No resource remained except to passionately pour forth

his grievances to the court-officials in the ante-room. But he only encountered troubled faces and heard whispered warnings to be cautious about expressing sympathy for a person accused of witchcraft.

During these hours in which he encountered so much cowardice and pitiful selfishness he at last learned to know in Frau Belier a loyal, brave, and shrewd friend, who felt something more than mere feeble compassion for Lydia. Finding deaf ears at the castle, the artist hurried to the gable-house on the market-place. The Frenchwoman uttered one *Mon Dieu* after another, while listening to Felix's account of what had happened; but when the Italian vehemently declared that there was nothing left for him to do except to stab the base magistrate in the street she pulled the dagger out of his belt and threw it into her cupboard, telling him that such a deed would be the surest way to utterly destroy Clytia. He listened angrily to the voluble words with which she opposed his plans. The screams of the insufferable parrot which swung gaily in its ring, shrieking louder and louder the more vehement the conversation became, made the young artist so furious that he would have liked to choke it. Frau Belier told him very positively that he must refrain from all interference; no one could be of any assistance in the matter except the Countess Palatine of the Neuburg convent, and thither the brave little lady went at once. Felix, urged by a vague desire to make himself useful to his friends, again rushed out of doors and wandered restlessly around the witch's tower, where he found excited groups assembled staring up at the windows, but no one could tell him in what part Lydia was imprisoned. The unfeeling words of the rude throng pierced his heart.

"Do you really believe the pretty, golden-haired creature is a witch?" he heard a young man ask compassionately.

"The devil wants pretty girls too, not merely old withered crones like the herb-woman," was the coarse answer.

It was fortunate that Frau Belier had taken away Felix's dagger or he would have stabbed the fellow for his cold-blooded brutality. He asked an old man who stood near shaking his head, if he thought the young girl would be set free.

"Oh! sir," replied the other, "I have lived opposite this tower forty years and have never yet seen a prisoner leave this door except with crippled limbs, and most of them on their way to the stake." Noticing how pale Felix turned and how his eyes rolled, he added: "My dear sir, if like me you were obliged to hear at night the terrible shrieks and piteous groans of the tortured, you would wish, as I do, that every one who is suspected might be burned at once, for the thought that perhaps some innocent person is being tormented so long is enough to drive one mad."

"And is there no help, none?" stammered Felix.

"None, unless Lucifer himself or the merciful God bears the prisoners away through the air," said the old man, and unable to bear the painful conversation longer he left him with a "God be with you," and crossed the street to his house.

"Through the air," murmured Felix as gazing up at the tower, he walked around it on all sides, and counted the windows. He thought it might be possible to climb up unseen from the garden of the Augustine monastery. Then, from the upper rooms he would search cell after

cell, striking down every one who barred his way to Lydia. If he could not bear her off, he would kill her and himself, or set the tower on fire and perish with her if they could not succeed in making their escape amid the confusion of the conflagration. After again examining all the surroundings he formed his plan. An old chestnut-tree that grew behind the tower rendered it possible for an expert and daring climber to reach the sill of a window which could surely be opened. The way out must then be made by a rope-ladder or with the dagger. The young man was so absorbed in his thoughts that he did not perceive how he was being watched. His plans of rescue might almost have been read on his face. Once it seemed to him as if a man on the other side of the street was stopping to speak to him, but when he looked across the person turned his back. It was Pigavetta. Felix took no farther heed of him, but went hurriedly to his work-shop in the castle, where he examined his borers, chisels, and saws, and after selecting the most suitable, set to work with feverish hands to make a rope-ladder long enough to reach to the ground from the roof of the witch's tower.

Meantime Frau Belier had walked rapidly to the convent, startling the abbess in her pleasant little room with the terrible tidings she brought.

"I will go to the elector at once," said the old lady. "His Highness will believe that I know as well as this dissolute magistrate whether a young girl who until a short time ago was under the shelter of these holy walls, is a child of light or a bride of Satan. Oh, these *exercitia*, these *exercitia*," she sighed. "They are the cause of all this trouble."

Horses were speedily harnessed to a carriage and the

abbess, with the exiled Huguenot by her side, drove to the castle as fast as the animals could go.

"A visit from you is rare, Cousin," was the prince's greeting, and he looked at the two ladies in surprise. The abbess in rapid eager words explained what had brought her to the palace and what she had heard of the grounds of suspicion against Clytia. A correct instinct made her connect Lydia's nocturnal adventure with Laurenzano's snares, for the country-folk had instantly told the gossip-loving nuns in the convent of the incident that had occurred on the Kreuzgrund.

The elector listened attentively. "Herr Pigavetta has certainly brought a fine sort of fellow into the country; but how do you know that he was in love with Erastus's daughter?"

The Countess Palatine hesitated. But mindful that her darling pupil's life was at stake, she remorsefully and reluctantly told the story of the strange *exercitia* in which she had surprised Paul with Clytia. She exposed the false priest all the more unhesitatingly because she suspected that he had himself devised the accusation against Lydia to avenge his slighted love. "Never have I gazed into a blacker soul," she said shuddering.

"In other words, Cousin," replied the elector indignantly, "this is a new punishment upon you and others for having made the convent a refuge for Papists. So I have been told the truth; you allowed this traitor to hold private masses."

The embarrassed Countess Palatine, fixing her eyes on the floor, made no reply. The elector in his wrath at this unpleasant discovery would have dismissed both petitioners without farther ceremony had not Frau Belier, whose husband the prince well knew was a zealous

Huguenot, implored him so touchingly not to let the poor imprisoned lamb suffer for the sins of the wolf in sheep's clothing that he promised to order the magistrate to report to him.

"Oh! most gracious Sovereign," cried the eager Frenchwoman throwing herself at the elector's feet, "you do not know the horrible treatment in the Witch's Tower. They will drive the poor child mad, frighten her to death, if she is obliged to spend the night there."

"Order must be maintained," said the elector. "Meister Ulrich will be told that he must answer for the young girl's safety with his life. No one shall be allowed to enter her cell until the magistrate fetches her. I'll answer for it that not a hair of her head shall be harmed, if her innocence is proved. But a person who roves about the woods at night and kisses priests on the cross-roads has no cause to complain if the jailer imprisons her. I am sorry for the pretty child, but at present I only know your version, not what the magistrate may have to say. Until her trial is over she can bear her father company in the thick tower, that is all I can do in the matter."

The ladies saw that no farther concession could be obtained, and fearing to irritate the elector against their protégé sorrowfully returned home.

Towards evening Laurenzano called on Frau Belier to request the return of his dagger. "Your folly would be absolutely aimless now," the little lady said, "for tomorrow Lydia will join her father in the tower which will be a kindness to her and to him." She eagerly related to the anxious listener what she had accomplished in her interview with the prince. But the passionate

young artist swore by the Madonna's eyes that he would not suffer his betrothed bride to languish in the terrible tower even one hour longer if he could prevent it, and explained the plan he had formed for her liberation.

"You are a fool with your schemes," cried the vivacious little lady. "To set fire to the tower, kill her, kill yourself—of what use to the poor child is such help, and even supposing that you could carry her away, where will you go with the girl and what gratitude will she feel towards you, if by your folly you make her father's situation worse?"

The artist gazed wildly at her and protested that he must do something, if it were only to kill himself, he could not endure the thought that Lydia was suffering and he was alive without aiding her. When Frau Belier saw that she could not turn him from his designs, she began to temporize. "Wait till Lydia has joined her father," she said, "and then release both."

"I cannot wait."

"Not wait till to-morrow, not when Lydia's life and happiness are at stake. Are you mad?"

Felix bit his lips wrathfully.

"*Filou Laurenzano*," shrieked the bird's shrill voice.

"*Maladetto!*" muttered the artist through his set teeth, and in his blind rage he dealt the parrot so well-aimed a blow with the dagger Frau Belier had just returned to him that the little creature's head flew against the wall, while the body with its wings still fluttering fell to the floor.

"What has the poor thing done, you horrible, blood-thirsty man, that you should kill it?" shrieked the Frenchwoman.

The artist's eyes rolled so wildly as he gazed around

him that Frau Belier in her fright forgot her beloved bird, and sprang back from the madman. "Oh! well, well," she cried, "kill me too, that will help Lydia," and burst into convulsive sobs.

Felix stared wildly at the quivering body of the bird and the pool of blood that stained the floor. At last he slowly passed both hands across his brow and eyes, saying: "Forgive me, noble lady, grief has turned my brain. You are right, I can undertake nothing until I am calmer. What you say is also true; Lydia will not fly with me without her father, and as all the plans of the castle are in my hands, it will be easier for me to release both from the thick tower than to rescue Lydia alone from the witch's tower."

The shrewd Frenchwoman, to soothe the excited man, entered into these considerations with apparent eagerness. She hoped that the elector would release Lydia the next day, and her conviction that the cautious Erastus would certainly attempt no plan of escape whose failure must surely entail his destruction, calmed her fears in other respects. So she dismissed Felix with good wishes, rejoicing when she was at last rid of the impetuous fellow. Sighing bitterly, she picked up the body of her gay-plumaged pet and kissed it. "How dearly I must love Lydia," she sobbed, "that I did not instantly scratch out the horrid wretch's eyes. But he shall pay for it." She carefully wiped up the bird's blood with a fine cloth, and wept as she laid the relic in an exquisitely-carved casket.

CHAPTER XXI.

A STORMY scene took place the following morning in the elector's study in the new palace. Herr Hartmann Hartmanni had taken refuge behind a leather-cushioned arm-chair to protect himself from the rage of the Count Palatine, and the corpulent sovereign, his face flushed with wrath, was angrily berating him. "Set them all free," cried the elector, "all. Do you understand?"

"If Your Highness would only consider," replied the magistrate obstinately, "how much misery this pestilence has brought upon the countries of the Palatinate. If those who are proved to have caused the plague by their diabolical arts must again be let loose on their fellow-men, the first to fall victims would be Your Highness' faithful servants who believed it necessary to interfere with these monsters."

"Who tells you that the plague is caused by witchcraft?" retorted the elector. "Only yesterday the consistory reported to me in a long document — here it lies — that it was evident to all the world that the pestilence had broken out in Schönau and Petersthal as a punishment for the horrible blasphemy of the Ariens in Ladenburg and Heidelberg, and to-day witches and wizards are accused of being the source of all this calamity. Whom shall I believe, you or Olevianus?"

Herr Hartmann Hartmanni assumed an extraordinarily wise and thoughtful expression. "If Your Highness would only consider that one does not exclude the

other. The witches' art was fettered and their hands paralyzed by the true worship of God and the divine favor thereby obtained, but scarcely had Sylvanus, Erastus, and Neuser sullied the land by secret impiety than the Most High again averted His face and the allies of Satan had free course. Or is it not a fact that directly after the appearance of the heresy witchcraft again arose?" The elector shrugged his shoulders contemptuously. "If Your Highness does not trust me and the consistory, the Faculties of Law of Heidelberg or Tübingen might surely be asked for a legal opinion."

"Deuce take your Faculties that annually deliver hundreds to the flames for the Judas wages of twelve gold florins," cried the old sovereign. "Where do you suppose the bones of Luther and Calvin would be now, if the Elector of Saxony and the honorable council of the city of Geneva had obtained a legal opinion from the jurists of the University? I know of no more venal people under God's free sky than the learned men who live by their legal opinions."

"Then there remains only the witch's ordeal."

"What ordeal?"

"Why, let the young girl be thrown into the Neckar; if she floats she is clearly a witch. If she sinks, she will be released from trial."

"And if she drowns or dies of fright, you will restore her to life again," said the elector with a look of fury.

"So nothing at all is to be done," replied the magistrate sullenly.

"If the herb-woman was caught with devilish vermin," said the elector, "sitting on the Holtermann or by the Linsenteich at an hour of the night when people

generally sleep, you may try her and sentence her, but set Erastus's daughter free this very day I tell you."

"But if Your Highness in your illustrious judgment would only reflect what a bad impression it cannot fail to make, if the old witch is tried because she was on the cross-roads at night, and the young one, who is guilty of precisely the same crime, is released?"

The elector went up so close to the magistrate that the latter again retreated behind the armchair. "I know you, Herr Hartmanni," he said sternly. "I know of your love-affairs in Ladenburg and Mosbach. You are longing to try a beautiful woman, to shave the hair from her body and do anything else you happen to think of, because you say that otherwise the devil will have power to strengthen the witch on the rack. You shall not lay a finger on that pious child, whom I have seen praying in my church every Sunday, and whose sincere devotion has often edified me when the controversial sermons of your ecclesiastical friends inspired me with loathing. This sweet, innocent young creature a witch! Who will be safe, if such a child can be tried?"

"But it is proved," persisted the magistrate with unprecedented obstinacy, "that this very girl with her hypocritical semblance of virtue has wandered about at night on the most notorious cross-road in the whole region. Three young fellows from Neuenheim whom the herb-woman named, confirm all her statements. They have made an affidavit that they met Erastus's daughter on the Holtermann one clear June night this year and tried to seize her, but she floated before them like a will o' the wisp and when they were on the point of grasping her near the haunted ruins of the crumbling

chapel, she dissolved into the air like mist and suddenly vanished."

The elector stared at the magistrate in amazement.

"I fear," continued the latter, "that we have to deal with one of those enchantresses whom the ancients called *Empusae*. A gentle charm attracts all men to her; wherever she has been she won all hearts by her superhuman beauty. She resembles the witch of Bacharach with her golden hair and perhaps, like her, obtained these radiant tresses in return for homage offered to Satan." The elector started impatiently, but Hartmanni continued: "There are very suspicious rumors in circulation about her. Among other things her maid-servant was heard to say that her young mistress had a green dress which looked better the longer she wore it."

"Nonsense!"

"At the convent where I myself, of course privately, made some inquiries, she bore the name of 'the bewitched maiden.' My instructions direct me to watch any one whom public gossip accuses of witchcraft. She has often rocked herself backwards and forwards on the pump-handle, as the witches' fiddler does when he plays for them to dance at the Saubrunnen."

"Folly!" muttered the old elector.

"Proof is added to proof. I have conducted the examination with the utmost care. Does Your Highness remember the fearful whirlwind we had on the fourth of this month, which tore away slates from the roofs, demolished chimneys, and uprooted the oldest trees in the castle grounds? Well, at sunrise on the morning of that very day, the young girl drew water from the well after first passing the spring, where she could

have obtained it far more easily. This drawing was only a pretext for throwing into the well three sage-leaves which, together with the uttering of a horrible formula, will produce a tempest. On her return from this criminal errand she had a blood-red rose in a glass, and the castellan's maid-servant—she goes by the name of 'red-haired Frenz' in the castle—asked where she picked the flower as no roses grow in the castle courtyard. What was her answer? 'From the stone wreath over your door.'"

"Servants' gossip!" said the elector angrily. "Of what benefit to her was the storm that broke her father's windows as well as mine?"

"She was trying to find means to attract the architect Laurenzano. When the storm burst, she lured him from the scaffold into her room and engaged herself to him at the very hour that other Christian people were kneeling in terror at the sulphurous flashes of lightning and the diabolical roar of the tempest."

The elector grew very thoughtful. "Erastus himself told me that," he thought. "The coincidence looks badly. Who are the three witnesses before whom she made herself invisible?" he asked.

"The sons of the landlord of the Rose, and Maier, the miller's apprentice from the Valley of the Seven Mills."

"Bad fellows, are they not?"

"Well, that's as people think. The miller's apprentice is a sharp, bold fellow, who fears neither witch nor devil. He has listened to the Black Mass at the White Stone."

"What, are witches' conventicles held in my dominions?" asked the perplexed elector.

“Not two leagues from your own city.” The stout sovereign’s eyes dilated more and more. “Your Highness knows the desolate table-land above the source of the stream that flows through the Valley of the Seven Mills—a barren mountain summit, covered with a tangled mass of thistles and blackberry-bushes amid which scattered boulders are strewn. The uncanny place bears the name of ‘The White Stone.’ The forest intersected by the highway is close by. The miller’s apprentice was in the woods on St. John’s eve, tracking a stag, when the light of a fire lured him to the moor. At first he thought it was a St. John’s fire kindled by the laborers, but when he came nearer he saw two columns of flames as high as towers, whose red and yellow flare illuminated the whole crest of the mountain and he beheld opposite, on the lofty peak of the Nistler, the same yellow light. Around the fire he saw the figures of men and women dancing, their black forms whenever they passed in front of the fire were distinctly relieved against the red glow, so that their shadows reached the cowering spy. A strange music of tiny bells tinkling in the distance, pipes, and viols echoed with a mysterious, stirring sound through the silence of the night. The fellow said he had to hold his legs to keep them from dancing. Then through the bushes he perceived whole troops of people stealing up in the darkness, and suddenly light glowed in front of the bush where he was crouching and he saw a devil carrying as a torch a child’s arm, whose fat fed the red flame. Behind this monster, whose back luckily was turned towards him, walked veiled and masked figures. He recognized no one. Indeed, he was so frightened that he threw himself flat on the ground and crawled

slowly back into the woods. The fellow, who certainly has not been very tenderly treated by lansquenets and poachers, said that never in his whole life will he forget the terror he endured during this retreat. The moon shone with a wan light as if horrified by the abominations she beheld. On the beech-tree by the cross-roads, where everything had been quiet when he passed a short time before, a devil now sat beating a drum with a fox's tail — the tap, tap, tap of which resounded a long distance. Behind him among the branches was the witches' fiddler playing a dance to lure the crowd. As the miller's boy murmuring a prayer, slipped by without allowing himself to be tempted, a peal of impish laughter rose behind him and echoed down the whole valley. On the Holtermann, riding on brooms, were four young witches who had lights fastened on their backs as signals for the others. He also heard the noise of fifes, drums, riders galloping past, and vehicles with ungreased axles. A whole troop of witches, mounted on oven and manure forks, brooms, and canes, or riding in carriages drawn by cats, or on the backs of hares swept along close by him. Barking dogs ran between his feet and the wings of owls grazed his cheeks, till in his fright he fell senseless to the ground. When he moved on again he saw in a ditch a party of distinguished-looking ladies and gentlemen seated around a table on which smoked a splendid roast joint and several dishes of field-fare. At the head sat the devil himself amusing the revellers by playing the bagpipe on a black cat.

“ He wore blue and red striped stockings, had a red beard, and a pointed hat adorned with gay ribbons and cocks' feathers. As he fixed his fiery eye on the ap-

prentice the latter screamed in terror: 'Oh! thou holy and blessed Trinity!' The earth instantly quaked so that the man fell stunned, and he now first perceived that he was at the flayer's hut, sitting by a dead grey horse and the bones of executed criminals. The field-fare were creeping about in the ditch in the shape of toads, and the guests, shrieking and sobbing, vanished among the bushes. Nothing else happened on the way to the Valley of the Seven Mills except that he met three hares, one of which had a goat's body. The fellow, who had now grown bolder, shouted: 'Stop, you witches, in the name of the triune God.' Then they changed into three black ravens and flew over to the Heiligenberg. Since then the devil gets out of Maier's way like a whipped hound. Maier told me so himself."

The magistrate, so well trained in the lore of the humanists, paused and wiped the perspiration from his brow. The elector had at first listened in blank amazement, then incredulously, and finally with unconcealed disgust. He now said thoughtfully: "If anything that bears even a distant resemblance to what you have related is going on here, it is because you tolerate so many worthless vagabonds who are a burden to all honest folk—jugglers, soothsayers, exorcisers, image-venders, mountebanks, ghost-exorcisers, conjurors and other strolling people who go to and fro between the bishoprics on the Rhine and the Maine, dissolute rogues, who if not actually in league with the devil are not very far from it."

"Vagabonds would not wear masks and disguises Your Highness," said Hartmanni wisely.

"Well and why should Erastus's daughter have been among the maskers?"

"Your Highness knows of the note by which, as her father asserts, Magister Laurenzano made an appointment to meet her on the spot where the witches dance on the Holtermann."

"Ah! yes, and how does this fine priest explain his invitation?"

The embarrassed magistrate cleared his throat: "I confess that I have not been able to examine him yet."

"What," cried the elector. "You have not yet examined the principal witness? And meantime you destroy the fair fame of an innocent girl on the testimony of an old hag and three dissolute rascals? You are a pretty magistrate! Do you know that I have been told this Laurenzano brought the poor girl into all this trouble by representing that he wanted to make important disclosures to her on the Holtermann about her father, and you don't examine the man?"

"I wished to do so," said the magistrate doubtfully, "but Herr Pigavetta guaranteed his innocence. Besides, he alone maintains order at Schöнау, so that he is indispensable there."

"Indeed! Splendid justice," thundered the enraged elector. "You leave the chief criminal at liberty and meantime want to subject the poor innocent girl to the torture; that is very pressing, that can't be deferred, but there's no hurry about examining the witnesses! Beware, Herr Hartmann Hartmanni, that I don't catch you again in such devious paths."

The magistrate bowed his bald head with an air of deep contrition. "First of all, arrest this Italian priest," the elector repeated.

"Herr Pigavetta says. . . ." the magistrate faltered.

"And I say," interrupted the infuriated Count Pala-

tine, "that I am beginning to be very suspicious of this Pigavetta. He smuggled this disguised Jesuit in here. He wanted to recommend him to me as a tutor for my children. He told my wife how thoroughly versed in astrology and astronomy the young man was, and tried to persuade her to investigate the future, with which common mortals have no concern, especially young wives wedded to old husbands. If this Doctor Pigavetta thinks he can worm his way everywhere in my house he is mistaken. And now enough of this. You will take the young girl this very day to her father in the thick tower. Under his protection she will be guarded from the witches and from you. You are to cross-examine the priest in Schönau and find out why he lured the young girl to the cross-roads, and how he explains the miracles he is said to have performed in Schönau. If I suspect any one of the whole pack of witchcraft," cried the excited sovereign in conclusion, "it is this pale-faced priest, who busies himself with astrology." He glanced at the planetary gods on the new palace opposite, where his young wife lived, and added: "All day long I have before my eyes the stone figure of Justice on the new palace. I will shatter the statue into fragments if I suffer even but *once* right to be trodden under foot in my domains."

The magistrate, bowing humbly, left the room with a very dejected air. Outside the door he was just opening his lips to utter an oath, when he caught sight of the pages at the window, and with a grimace intended for a smile went down the stairs.

CHAPTER XXII.

AN hour after the attack in the court-yard Lydia found herself lying on a bundle of straw that swarmed with vermin in a little room with grated windows. She felt a hard, bony hand applying a wet cloth to her forehead, and wanted to give her nurse a grateful glance, but the face she beheld was so horrible that she closed her weary lids in terror. "How did I come here?" she asked herself. She had a vague remembrance of having ridden in a cart and once, on opening her eyes, of having seen groups of citizens in the street who gazed after her in horror. The recollection of beholding before her the witch's tower on the rampart and being dragged along a dark passage still lingered in her mind like a troubled dream.

"Well, I suppose you think I've nothing to do but wait on you," she now heard a harsh, grumbling voice scolding: "Go to the devil at once for aught I care, it will be best for you and us." While speaking she shook the poor fainting girl so violently that Lydia again recovered consciousness and started up in terror. The dirty woman before her resembled a vicious old dog that has a still more vicious master. One eye had been knocked out and the red face bore various traces of frequent abuse.

"What must I do, what must I do?" moaned Lydia, trying to shake off the old hag's iron grip.

"You must confess, confess at once that you are a

witch, for if people like you are given time to think, the matter always drags on twice as long."

"But I am not a witch," sighed the exhausted girl.

"They all say that, but haven't you been on the Holtermann at night?"

"Yes," sobbed Lydia.

"You see, you see."

"I only wanted. . . ."

"Only wanted what. We know what people want on the Holtermann at night. Didn't you draw water from the well at sunrise on the day the hurricane tore off the castle roof?"

"Draw water? Yes."

"You see, you see."

"I only wanted. . . ."

"We know what you wanted," croaked the old woman. "Didn't you tell red-haired Frenz that you practised witchcraft?"

"Never, never," said Lydia weeping.

"Aha, never, and yet she says you showed her a real rose which you picked from the stone wreath over the entrance."

"Oh, that was only a joke."

"Aha, a joke . . . we'll teach you to make such jokes. How often have you ridden over to the White Stone on a broomstick?"

"Never, surely never."

"And to the Auerkopf?"

"Never there, either."

"Nor to the hollow chestnut-tree, the Dachsbau, or the lofty Nistler?"

"I swear to you that I know nothing about any of them."

"I am sorry for you, little one," said the old creature, who looked at that moment like a snake pitying a frightened rabbit. "You are such a pretty girl. Confess before it is too late. Think of being hung up by a rope with heavier and heavier weights fastened to your dainty feet. Oh! dear, oh! dear, how it hurts! No one has ever held out. Consider the torture and shame that will be inflicted upon you."

Lydia raised her apron and bit it in silent despair. Her eyes had grown pale with horror. She sat like a statue of misery, of madness, and no longer heard what the old woman was saying. Then a sudden chill made her tremble violently. The executioner himself now entered and addressed unseemly words to her, which however she did not understand. At last the old woman grew angry, seized her by the hair, and dragged her up and down, shrieking: "Confess, you obstinate creature! When did you go to the Black Mass?"

But Lydia did not feel it.

"Don't bother," said the executioner. "She'll remember when she's hanging by the rope." Lydia stared vacantly at him. "Were not you called the 'bewitched maiden' at the convent?" he shouted furiously.

"Yes, I was, I was," sobbed the poor girl, overpowered by her misery.

"There, she has confessed," said the executioner. "Come, I'm tired of this whining." He aimed a blow with his bunch of keys at his wife, who obediently left the room. Lydia was again alone, faintness and weakness deadened her sufferings, and as the terrible heat in her little cell was cooled by the rain now pouring in torrents, she fell asleep. When again startled from her stupor she heard the bells of the Heiligengeistkirche

chime the hour of midnight. Her head was bewildered. The questions asked by the hideous inquisitors had confused her brain. The confidence with which she had been repeatedly told that she was guilty had dazed her. She could scarcely believe that without any fault of her own, she had fallen into such deep misery. Her walk to the Holtermann now seemed like a grave crime. Had she not really sat beside the witch in the forbidden place, and had not the Evil One perhaps then obtained power over her? Had she not once dreamed that she was floating through the air from the Holtermann to the castle, and while doing so had she not distinctly seen the lighted windows of the city before her? What if in her sleep, she had actually without knowing it been compelled by the power of the Evil One to ride to the witches' dancing-ground, as many people in their dreams walk in the moonlight and are not aware of it the next morning? Had she not, after all, really conjured up the storm, by the devil's leading her to get water from the well at an ominous hour? Who could tell what connection this deep spring had with the clouds! And had she not really talked very wickedly when she told red-haired Frenz that she had picked Felix's rose from the stone garland? What a sacrilege it was that, amid thunder and lightning, when God was distinctly uttering His wrath, she had allowed herself to be clasped in the artist's arms and receive his caresses. A terrible fear seized upon her, and her troubled thoughts grew more and more confused. When the clock struck one Lydia was convinced that she was a witch and determined to confess everything, then she would at least escape the rack. She knew that she was lost, but she would not allow herself to be tortured.

“If only they don't ask who taught me witchcraft and summoned me to the Holtermann!” sighed the poor girl. Then she imagined how they would finally extort from her the confession that it was Paul. Her agony was boundless. The clock now struck two. Lydia felt as if the burden of these horrible thoughts would kill her if they assailed her much longer, and in her distress began to repeat all the prayers, texts, and hymns she knew, and while doing so grew calmer, though her heart was filled with spasmodic dread. At last day dawned, but no one came to her. She heard the stir of awakening life in the city and could interpret every sound. There was a joyous bustle in the streets as usual. She heard the boys shouting, whistling, singing; she heard the barking of dogs, the rattling of carts, the creaking of wheels, the tramp of horses' hoofs, everything was going on the same as ever, and no one thought of her misery. A feeling of infinite bitterness took possession of her young heart. Of how little value was the human friendship in which her childish mind had happily believed. How many her poor father had helped! How often she had heard councillors and beggars, the well and the sick say: “What should we do without the Herr Rath” — and now their preserver was a prisoner in the thick tower, and the people could laugh and talk, the boys whistle the tune of that insufferable song about the fairest Gabrielle. They did not trouble themselves about her either, yet they had always smiled at her so pleasantly when they called her the lovely Lydia. Felix would probably grieve for her, but she had seen him lying with a pale face and bleeding head on the stairs as she was dragged away. Perhaps he was dead, perhaps he too was in prison. And

the elector and his wife, who had always spoken to her so graciously when she moved aside with a respectful curtsy — could they allow her to be given up to these men under their own eyes! She gazed sadly through the grated windows at the deep-blue September sky, over which long silvery threads of gossamer floated till they caught on the prison bars. Until now she had childishly fancied her father and herself to be an essential portion of the lives of her fellow-citizens. Now it dawned upon her that not only she herself, with her youthful beauty and her joyous laugh, but even her grave father, with all his wisdom and ability, could be taken out of this busy existence and people live on just as before. All the lights in which the world had glittered before her inexperienced youth were extinguished at one blow. The childish expression of her face was gone, a single hour had stamped upon it the earnest look of an experienced woman. Yet there was nothing gloomy in this seriousness; even now her gentle, modest nature held the victory over the bitterness of her heart. “Have not you, too,” she said to herself, “jested and shouted, sung and laughed in the castle gardens without thinking of the poor prisoners sighing behind their iron bars? Could *any* man enjoy his life, even for a single moment, if he was constantly thinking of those who at that very time were suffering some injustice? . . . But I will remember it henceforward,” she said to herself. “I will daily strive to make as much happiness around me as I can wrest from misery. I will take the part of all who are innocent and defend them, even if appearances are against them, and will tell them how I have fared myself. But are you innocent?” She again returned to the question of the preceding night — the

doubt whether her own guilt might not really be the cause of all this terrible suffering. But the thoughts born in darkness melted away before the bright rays of the September sun shining in golden radiance through the bars of her prison. She had acted foolishly in her blind passion, but she had done nothing that deserved such punishment, and therefore cherished the hope that God, who had led her out of the dark vault of Michaelskirche when no one knew where she was, would not now deliver her up to the Evil One, into whose power she had perhaps fallen by that wicked nocturnal expedition. Perhaps faithful Father Werner would again find his way to her, or Frau Belier, or the abbess, or even the elector himself. With a firm resolve to strengthen herself for the impending conflict she ate some of the bread that lay on the window-sill and drank water from the jug beside it. Then with implicit trust in God she gazed out through her prison bars, feeling sure that the miller from the Kreuzgrund would come again with his red-haired son, or some other faithful friend. Yet a shudder ran through her limbs when at noon she at last heard a heavy step and the key turned creaking in the door. The one-eyed old woman still in her dirty gown entered, but this time she asked in a humble cringing tone how the poor young lady felt? Little heed as Lydia was disposed to give the hideous creature, she perceived that something must have occurred to subdue her. At last the latter said that the elector had ordered Lydia to be imprisoned in the thick tower, so she must bid farewell to the poor prisoner, for whom she was so heartily sorry. She hoped the young lady would give her and Meister Ulrich credit for the gentleness and kindness

with which they had treated her. Her trial was not yet over, and if she slandered Meister Ulrich he would pay her for it should she ever be sentenced to torture. Lydia silently let the horrible woman talk on; but when her faithful Barbara appeared she sank into the arms of her old nurse and the blessed relief of tears melted half her sorrows. The old servant herself was half dead with fright, for Meister Ulrich had accosted her and hinted that she too might be accused of being a witch for not having prevented her young mistress from practising magic. The faithful soul was still trembling so violently with terror, that she had great difficulty in arranging Clytia's hair and dress. At last Lydia was ready, and after Barbara had thrown a cloak over her they prepared to follow a halberdier to the castle. Meister Ulrich holding his bunch of keys, stood at the door. "In three days, Jungfer, we shall meet again," he said with a spiteful glance. "The court for trying witches always meets here, for its members can never do without me long, so guard your tongue. Even if you escape this time, remember that the next person I string up by the rope to extort the names of her accomplices may mention you; sooner or later you'll come back here again. I'll say no more, you know what is best for you."

Lydia pressed on in silence. The soldier waiting outside looked kindly at her. "Cheer up, Jungfrau," he said. "His Highness has permitted you to go to your father in the thick tower, and I don't think the good councillor himself will stay there long. Our Lord may suffer the raging of the foreigners for a time, but He will not desert His Own at last."

"Only to go to my father, that is all I wanted yester-

day," sobbed Lydia. If there was no other way to him than through the witches' tower, then her terrible night was not too high a price. She dried her eyes with the firm resolve to be very grateful and cheerful, and say nothing about her horrible experiences that she might not sadden the disheartened man still more.

At the very hour when Lydia, faint and ill, was tottering up the hill to the castle, often leaning on the arm of the weeping maid-servant, Erastus was sitting in a strongly-secured room in the thick tower, gazing through his grated window at the ruins of the old citadel, now gleaming in the golden light of the setting sun. There the Counts Palatine had lived in the days when they were accustomed to hurl their ecclesiastical or secular foes down the eastern or the western slope of the Jettenbühl. Their indifference to the curses of the bishops or the bans of popes had made them famous. They now occupied the proud palace below, but the foe was ensconced within the fortress itself, disguised Jesuits and Calvinistic confederates were sowing the seed of ecclesiastical strife and making the foreign alliances which must necessarily ruin the country. "One party has never acknowledged religious peace, the other is doing everything in its power to prevent the Palatinate from enjoying it, what can the end be save blood and woe? Thou blooming Palatinate! Who knows what Guises and Albas may yet await thee! It seems as if I heard in the distance the roar of the cataract which is sweeping our little bark to destruction while the crew are wrangling." Such were the thoughts that passed through the imprisoned statesman's brain as he gazed over the tops of the dark chestnut trees to the ancient citadel, the cradle of the princes of the Palatinate, while his

fingers played absently with a bundle of papers whose official nature was shown by the blue and white tape of the government. At last he opened and read them. An ironical smile hovered around his full lips. "General of the Arians and commander-in-chief of the hosts of Satan," he muttered. "I am progressing in my career of Antichrist," and he seized a pen to answer the indictment of the consistory. But anger suddenly overpowered him and he flung pen and papers aside. Why should he answer men who were resolved to ruin him, and who had even used forged papers for the purpose? The elector's former friendship would protect him from torture and abuse — he could rely on that. His enemies would probably be satisfied with getting rid of him. Banishment, in his opinion, would be the probable result. In the weakness of Calvinism in Germany it would be contrary to the interests of the consistory to attract attention by severe measures and harsh punishments, and the physician to whom the whole world stood open, was willing to set out on his travels again. So after a hasty examination he threw aside his enemies' accusations with a feeling of mingled contempt and loathing. He, the faithful disciple of Zwingli, was said to have formed a conspiracy to make the Palatinate Unitarian or, as the members of the consistory preferred to say, Mohammedan. "Because all the leaders of the Unitarians, Servetus, Blandrata, Socinus, were physicians, Doctor Erastus must of course be a Unitarian too," he said to himself with a scornful laugh. "Priestly logic of the Hogstraten school! Content yourselves with my head, I'll never give either Olevianus or Ursinus the pleasure of having me beseech their mercy . . . They wanted to extort my opinions from the weak-minded

runaways by means of the rack," he added, shaking his head. . . . "that's the way with these mild-mannered men of God."

His own affairs were thus settled, but he was sorely oppressed by anxiety for Lydia. How had his child, the idol of his heart, been drawn into these atrocities? By what devilish wiles had the Jesuit succeeded in luring the innocent girl to the cross-roads late in the evening? This childishly careless act might produce the most serious results if the witch should name her as one of her accomplices, and what pleasure it would afford the members of the consistory, to subject Erastus's daughter to church discipline and place her on the stool of penitence before the whole congregation. Nay, perhaps even this would not be all. Suppose old Sibyl, whom he had often sternly rebuked for her bungling attempts to dabble in medicine, should avenge herself on him by accusing Lydia of practising witchcraft. He dared not pursue this train of thought. Such a charge was doubly perilous for a girl of Lydia's beauty. This was the reason that sleep fled from the prisoner, that he paced his room restlessly from morning till night, and that he besought the elector through his gaoler to grant him an interview with his daughter. — He was sorrowfully watching the sun set behind the violet-hued mountain peaks near Worms, when a noise in the passage roused him from his gloomy fancies. The key rattled, the door opened, and the jailer entered with his servant to prepare another bed in the room.

"What does this mean?" asked Erastus in surprise.

"Another prisoner is coming in," replied the turnkey roughly.

"So I am to be watched day and night," thought

Erastus. "Herr Hartmanni may rest easy on that score. I'm not in the habit of talking in my sleep. But Heaven knows what testimony they will procure against me in this way. Apparently they don't mean to stop at forged letters. It will be easier for the gentlemen, if I verbally advocate Mohammedanism. Be it so—even in the history of our Lord's Passion it is said: 'Many bore false witness against Him, but their witness agreed not together.'"

Again steps approached. The fellow-prisoner was being brought in. Erastus turned to the window. He did not mean to utter a syllable to the man who was to play the spy upon him; it would be more difficult for the members of the consistory to pervert his words, if he had wasted none on their informer.

"Here," said the jailer behind him to the newcomer, and the door banged loudly. But that very instant Erastus felt the clasp of a girl's soft arms. "Father, dear father!" an angel's voice seemed whispering in his ear, and Lydia was resting on his breast. In his delight he raised his arms to clasp her to his heart, but drew back again.

"What were you doing on the Holtermann?" he asked sternly. Lydia gazed frankly into his grave face.

"Father, I neither meant nor did anything wrong. I allowed myself to be lured there by a message from the Italian pastor, of which you have already heard, but found no one there except the herb-woman who, because I disturbed her in her witchcraft, sent three monsters after me who chased me till I fell into the Pagan's Hole. There kind faithful Father Werner found me with a sprained foot and brought me home."

Never in his whole life had Erastus found such com-

fort in his child's frank clear eyes as at this moment. No words were needed, he could read in that look of childish innocence that Lydia did not even comprehend what other sin she was said to have committed. Entirely relieved he drew her to his heart.

"So the elector has permitted you to bear me company, my poor frightened little bird," said Erastus tenderly stroking the girl's fair hair. "How pale and ill you look after all your terror!"

Lydia did not contradict her father. She wished him to believe that she was only here to keep him company. But Erastus was startled when on looking more closely at his only treasure he perceived that her cheeks were burning with a feverish flush and her pulse was quick and fitful. "Lie down, Lydia, you need rest," he said gravely, "some sickness seems to be threatening you." The poor child obeyed, but carefully as the physician avoided making any noise, she could not sleep. At last she resolved, as her father must finally hear the whole story, to relieve her heart. Silent and rigid the grief-stricken man listened to the tale of the weeping girl.

"They are thoroughly versed in the Old Covenant," he said to himself, "they root out their enemies with all their seed." Then bending gently down to Lydia he kissed her pure brow. "That you are here, my child," he said tenderly, "proves the elector's favor. But if malice should win the battle, we will die together."

Lydia threw her arms lovingly around his neck and after warmly kissing him fell into a deep sound sleep, while the excited physician lay on his couch, wondering to whom he could apply to remove his child out of the reach of these terrible men. "But if there is no escape, she must

confess herself guilty at once in the very first examination," Erastus silently resolved, "then she will perhaps at least escape the shame and suffering of the torture. God of Justice, Thou wilt pardon us for this denial of the truth. We are too weak to bear this affliction. . . . I recognize Thy hand," he added sorrowfully. "Thou dost desire to loose me from error by bitter means." The prisoner spoke remorsefully, for firmly believing in devils' covenants and witchcraft, he had written a book on the influences of demons and — alas that he could no longer retract it — commended the violence of the magistrates. "It shall be done unto thee as thou hast said." The strong man pressed his face on his pillow and wept bitterly.

After lying in this attitude for a time he thought he heard the tapping and boring of a chisel on the wall outside. For a while it ceased and then it began again. He rose softly that he might not wake Lydia and went to the window. Yes, it was no illusion, the tapping began again and this time it sounded nearer; but the wall was too thick for him to see out unless he crept into the window-niche. His heart throbbed expectantly. So he had friends who were working for his release. After a while it seemed as if he heard whispering near his casement, but it stopped when he opened the window. He still distinguished the noise of little stones dropping from the wall, and could plainly hear two voices below him; then all was silent again and his listening ear only heard the night-wind howling around the thick tower, and the groaning and creaking of the gnarled boughs of the old chestnut trees. Shivering, the disappointed prisoner went back to bed, uncertain whether he ought to risk an attempt at flight if the opportunity

were offered on the morrow. He would never have done so for himself, but his child's danger made him ready to endure any calumny on the part of his enemies if Lydia could only escape the open jaws of the horrible monster that had already seized her in its claws. He listened a long time on his couch, which sleep had deserted, to hear whether the knocking was repeated, but only distinguished the sighing of the wind as it died away. At each fresh gust the valley re-echoed the deep and melancholy groan with which the old trees answered the gale, and then the howling of the tempest again sank into a low moaning and, as the human heart attunes its own grief to the voices of nature, so these tones sounded to the captive in the thick tower like the sighs of agony from one of the hapless sufferers, exhausted by torture, from whom the first torments wring wild shrieks but who at last can only utter feeble moans. Night was already yielding to the pale glimmer of dawn when a heavy slumber finally took compassion on the sorely-tried father.

CHAPTER XXIII.

ERASTUS had heard aright. The tapping, boring, and hammering meant an attempt at rescue. In spite of all Frau Belier's representations, Felix had persisted that he must at least afford Erastus the chance of escape. In case the Rath declined his offer, he would at least have shown Clytia that he was her faithful friend in trouble, and the comfort his betrothed bride might obtain from this would be worth any peril

or toil he could undergo. This last plea had extorted a certain degree of approval from the romantic disposition of the brave little Frenchwoman, though she refused to take part in any enterprise which might as easily injure as benefit Erastus. But to get rid of Felix, she told him that if he should bring the liberated prisoners to her house, her chivalrous husband would not refuse them shelter, and at the next shipment of the rich merchant's wares, the father and daughter could avail themselves of the opportunity to reach the Rhine and go to Basle or Holland, as Erastus preferred. The most important thing for the architect to do was to discover in which cell of the thick tower Erastus was lodged. With apparent unconcern though it was not his custom to go there at twilight he went up on his scaffolding, the upper half of which had already been taken down, and leaning against one of the young Countess Palatine's windows gazed sharply at the thick tower opposite. The curtained windows might be the physician's, if he was treated as his merits deserved. But above them Felix distinguished a man's figure leaning against the bars — was it the councillor? Yet who would guarantee that he had been lodged on this side? Besides, it was now too dark to recognize any one. No course remained except to openly ask which cell Erastus occupied, a plan that could hardly fail to rouse suspicion against the questioner. Just as Felix was about to descend a gentleman came forward to the window from the back of the room and, as if he had been watching him for some time, said: "Yes, yes, my dear friend, I too lament the fate of the man who has always been so loyal to us Italians, and can understand your sorrow for the lovely Lydia."

"Oh, the Madonna sends you to me," cried the artist. "Pray, noble sir, which is Erastus' cell?"

Pigavetta's pale face appeared at the window and as he placed his sharp teeth close to the architect's ear he looked more than ever like a beast of prey. "You wish to free him?" he whispered.

"I merely desired to know where my betrothed bride's father is imprisoned."

"True, I forgot that Lydia, poor child, is your promised wife." Of course he wants to release both, he thought, that's why he was prowling about the witch's tower half the afternoon. The artist vehemently asserted his conviction of Lydia's innocence. "Who could suppose her to be guilty?" said Pigavetta absently. It would be wise for me to profit by this favorable opportunity, the old Jesuit was calculating. The fat rascal's punishment is of no especial consequence and he will always be a troublesome witness. If the old sinner escapes, everything will be plain and easy. "Listen, my young friend," he then said cordially, "we are countrymen, let us not play hide and seek with each other. My heart is set on saving Erastus' life, for I owe him much and have wept tears of blood over his child's fate this very morning. Trust me, I wish to save them, do you wish it too?"

"*Sanguinaccio di Dio!* do I?" cried Felix enthusiastically.

"Very well, my friend. That is Erastus' cell yonder, where the lamp has just been lighted. It is the same one in which Sylvanus was imprisoned before he was removed to the wretched prison at Mannheim, where intermittent fever is wearing the poor man's life out. How you are to reach the window you must plan

for yourself. It shall be my care to have the sentries sleep soundly to-morrow night. But make haste, Erastus will be sentenced within the next few days."

Felix wanted to thank Pigavetta, but he had already vanished in an adjoining room, and the loud sound of voices within compelled the artist to retreat also. Now that he knew where to find Erastus he felt little anxiety about the rest. All the plans of the castle were in his hands, and he had only to decide upon the easiest way through garrets and store-rooms to the high gable next to the window pointed out by Pigavetta. Now that his mad excitement had subsided, the Italian was again the cool, resolute architect, who carefully considered every detail. The first point was to get possession of the key to the secret passage that led by the western wall into the city. Being familiar with the porter's habits, he took it away, while the worthy man was at supper, from the board where it hung and covered the empty place with the official's thick winter cap. Part of that night and the following morning he used in making his rope-ladder stronger and safer, so that Lydia might not fall a victim to his attempt to rescue. When the hour of noon summoned all the inmates of the castle from their work, he provided himself with a strong wire and several tools and then went softly up the stairs of the Ruprechtsbau until he reached a store-room, whose door he opened by converting the wire into a hook which unlocked it. At this time no human being was in the granaries, now glowing with heat under the fierce blaze of the noon-day sun. A faint dusky twilight pervaded the lofty space, and the motes danced in the sunbeams streaming obliquely through the dormer windows like a clustering host of stars. The artist walked across

the dim garret to a flight of steps leading through an opening in the ceiling to a larger attic. He knew that he was now in that portion of the castle whose gable-roof adjoined the thick tower and gave access by a narrow flight of stairs to the secret passage. A door marked the place where these steps began. It was firmly fastened ; but the artist expected this, and taking a chisel out of his pocket easily loosened the screws. The task was completed in half an hour and, after removing the door from its hinges, he went up some wooden steps to a chamber of solid masonry with narrow grated windows. The iron rings on the walls showed that he was in one of the secret dungeons. A niche with an iron chain which ran over a wheel told the tale of private executions in this silent room, from which no sound could reach the castle court-yard.

"They might put you too on this stool," thought Felix, "slip the chain round your neck, then turn the wheel and the iron noose would close and strangle you." He shuddered. How many prisoners of State like Erastus had probably breathed their last sigh here. Another flight of stairs led past similar cells. The artist glanced timidly into them and saw with satisfaction large rats scampering comfortably about the unoccupied rooms. He next reached a stout iron door, whose lock he could not open and whose rusty screws also resisted his strength ; so there was nothing to be done except to go all the way back to his room and supply himself with oil and stronger tools. Then he succeeded in taking this door off its hinges also. It led to a winding staircase of solid stone, on whose upper landing stood a lantern holding a tallow candle, which the artist lighted and descended about three hundred

steps. He had with him the key of the heavy lock of the lowest door, which he opened and found himself in a long dark corridor, that finally led to a small courtyard near the ramparts. He softly unlocked the little gate that separated the court-yard from the street and then returned by the same way, leaving all the doors behind him ajar. On reaching the upper garret again he stopped to consider how he could devise an easy method of getting from Erastus's window to the ridge of the roof opposite. The surest way of protecting Lydia from any injury, it seemed to Felix, would be to bring a ladder here and then break a sufficiently large hole in the roof. His rope-ladder must then secure a passage from the tower-window to the opening. After concealing his tools under the rafters he went thoughtfully back through the store-rooms, pondering how it would be possible to bring a long ladder there in broad daylight. He had reached the upper story of the Ruprechtsbau, where the servants had their rooms, when a noise startled him. Before him stood an old housekeeper on whose face it was easy to read the indignant question — what does the Italian gentleman want here? Felix laughed as gaily as he could, signed to her to keep silence, and then walked quietly down-stairs. The woman looked angrily after him, saying: "So he has found out that red-haired Frenz receives visitors. But the wench shall be dismissed from my service this very week," and she went into her own room, banging the door furiously. After this encounter Felix did not think it advisable to be seen upstairs again before night, but when every one was asleep he went to the gable-room and, by skilfully removing four rows of tiles up to the ridge of the roof and exposing the rafters with their laths, he arranged with con-

siderable toil but perfect security an easy ladder on which a child could climb up and down to the open window. After securing a firm foot-hold on the top of the roof — by removing more tiles—he noiselessly bored holes in the round wall of the tower opposite, and in these apertures fastened hooks by which to reach the window twelve feet above him. Securing the upper irons, which he was compelled to accomplish while standing on the rope-ladder, was not without peril. The night-wind howled and whistled around the tower impeding his work, but it also drowned the sound of his hammer. Finally the last hook was inserted and now his game was won, for he could tie the end of the rope to the bars of the window and need not trust Lydia's precious life to the uncertain iron by which he himself had climbed. After binding the rope firmly, he threw his arm around the bars and trembling with excitement tapped with his wearied hand on Erastus's window. Just as he was about to knock the second time it opened.

"Is it you, Erastus?" whispered Felix.

"Yes," was the murmured reply.

"Is Lydia with you?"

"She is asleep."

"Then take these steel saws and this little vial of corrosive acid and cut through the bars on this side. Not here, for this is where the ladder hangs. The opening will be large enough to let you and Lydia pass."

Saws and vial instantly vanished through the window. "Meantime I'll go down," the artist continued, "to loosen the end of the ladder, so that you can draw it up higher and fasten it still more firmly. But by the Madonna's eyes, be cautious, one false step will hurl you

into the yard beneath. Don't wake Lydia till you are ready, it is unnecessary to prolong the time of suspense for her."

Even while climbing down Felix heard a strong hand begin to saw through the iron bars above. He returned to the attic and retraced his steps over the whole way by which he was to guide the father and daughter, finding all the doors open, all the corridors empty; so he lighted several lamps which he had brought with him to mark the direction distinctly. Then he went back to the top of the roof, where he could hear Erastus toiling unweariedly and even felt the iron filings drop on his own head. The task was now completed, the bar sawn through was removed by a powerful wrench and placed inside. Then the ladder was drawn up and Felix saw two hands tying it firmly above.

"He will surely let Lydia come down first," thought the excited artist, "so that he can help her from above." A dark figure already appeared on the ladder. "Bring Lydia first," called Felix, but the heavy man climbed steadily down the wall, then stood on the roof, and now hurried over the rounds of the ladder to the window, where Felix helped him in. Here the rescued prisoner turned his head and Felix saw the fat red face of Parson Neuser. His first impulse was to seize the hated clergyman and hurl him with a single thrust into the court-yard below.

"*Corpo di Baccho!*" he furiously exclaimed, "why did you lie to me and say you were Erastus?"

"Ah, Signor Italiano, I owe my escape to you!" panted Neuser, as without losing an instant he leaped down to the floor of the garret.

"*Birbante!*" hissed Felix, "*coglione!*"

"My dear sir," said the pastor calmly, wiping away the perspiration streaming from his brow, "did not your brother teach me at the Stag that dissimulation was a virtue, as is everything, that gives man power over his fellow-men? Tell the pious Magister that Pastor Neuser thanks him for this useful truth."

Felix gnashed his teeth with rage, but Neuser said good-naturedly: "How can you expect me, sir, to allow myself to be beheaded, while a short imprisonment will surely not cost the good councillor his life."

"You have behaved like a German," said Felix roughly. "You abandon an innocent girl to be tried for a witch in order to save your own fat carcass."

"Gently, Signor Italiano," said Neuser coolly. "This clever little plan would have been far too round for my square Swabian skull. Your countryman, Pigavetta, gave me the point."

"Pigavetta!" cried Felix in amazement, "he pointed out this window to me."

"Ah, you begin to see, my dear sir. I returned at an inconvenient season for your countryman because he pretended to have found among the fugitive pastor's papers all sorts of letters which the latter knows nothing about. So he offered me money to pay my travelling expenses, and a free passage out of prison, if I would disappear." The pastor jingled several thalers in his pocket as he spoke. "The clever gentleman also wanted to get from me all sorts of written evidence to agree with his documents, but I didn't trust him and said I would send it to him when I was free. You can now tell him that I've changed my mind. But don't look so disheartened. Climb up and enter my window. If you can burst the bolt of the

door, you will find Erastus in the third cell to the left. I saw him yesterday through the keyhole. Then you can fetch him by the same way I came. How must I go now?"

"To the light yonder, then turn to the right where you will see more lights," said Felix impatiently.

"I thank you heartily," said Neuser cordially. "Remember me to the beloved man of God Olevianus and tell him if he still longs for my head, he must write to Constantinople for it. I'm tired of consistories and magistrates and will try my luck with Cadis and Muftis." Then Felix heard him grope his way through the garrets, and after a time his steps died away in the secret corridor below.

"I must follow the man's advice," said Felix wearily—it cost him a struggle to repress tears of disappointment and grief. "I'll try to reach Erastus through Neuser's cell by bursting the bolts, if it can be done." Once more the agile man dauntlessly climbed the wall, entering through the hole in the bars. "If prison fare had not made the reverend gentleman somewhat thinner, he wouldn't have got through here," he involuntarily thought. Groping about in the darkness he at last found the door and tried the locks, but soon discovered that none of his tools were fit to burst these strong bolts. A glimmer of light behind the Königstuhl announced the approach of morning, so he unfastened his ladder and descended the wall by the hooks he had driven in. Though utterly exhausted, he was forced to again go through the whole length of the secret passage. He put the key on the street side of the little gate to make it appear as if aid had come from without, took the lamps away, put the doors he had removed back on their

hinges, and after having obliterated every sign that could betray him returned almost wearied to death to his room. Carefully placing the articles he had used in a safe hiding-place, he sank already half asleep on his bed! When he woke, Bachmann was standing beside him to enquire about the condition of the wound in his head. Felix willingly let him put on a fresh bandage and remained in bed to have his sleep out. The old man with ill-concealed joy told the young architect that Pastor Neuser in some very marvellous way had escaped from prison. The little door of the secret passage had been found open, and the keeper had been arrested because the key was missing. Neuser had many friends in the city, so it was no wonder that aid had reached him. But the elector saw in the event a proof that the conspiracy in favor of the Arians still existed, and it was said that in his wrath he had ordered the magistrate to have the death sentence executed upon Sylvanus and his colleagues Vehe and Suter.

"May their bones bleach on the gallows," said Felix coldly, turning his face to the wall. Then he fell quietly asleep again.

CHAPTER XXIV.

ON the morning after the encounter at the miller's house in the Kreuzgrund, Magister Paul wandered into the woods as if in a dream and lost himself amid the trees. It was no gloomy fancy, but the plain bare truth; a just though rude hand had torn the veil from the close-guarded secret of his inmost soul, and before

the people who regarded him as little less than a saint he had stood a convicted criminal, a betrayer of youth, a juggler who misused the most sacred things to gratify his own base passions. The fettered witch on her way to the stake seemed to him enviable when he compared her rôle with the part *he* had played, and the abominable woman had thought so herself, her eyes had sparkled so joyously as she shouted his secret to the world. The Baptist heretic had treated him like a culprit and he had been unable to make any reply, while his benefactor, Erastus, had fallen senseless before him as if struck in the heart by a treacherous bullet which he had discharged from an ambush at the man who had showed him nothing but kindness. "O God!" Paul faltered as he staggered on through bushes and underbrush, "I did not desire this. Thou art my witness; I meant no one harm, it was a sinister spell that drove them and myself to ruin." As if to escape his thoughts he rushed breathless up the mountain. "A spell," whispered the spirit of self-apology. "Was it a spell?" Might not the witch have kindled in his heart this evil fire in which all his good resolutions were consumed? He had rushed to ruin with as much blind fury as if he had eaten mad-wort. Or, after all, was this beautiful child herself an embodiment of Satan, who had staked his honor upon luring the *primus omnium* of the college at Venice from the right path? Who save the devil had inspired the crazy idea of making an appointment with Lydia at the notorious cross-roads, when he might have met her at a hundred less suspicious places. And how, by all the Saints, could Lydia have obeyed the summons? Was she really as familiar with the Holtermann as the witch alleged? Whence comes her

superhuman beauty? Oh! now he could understand why his heart burned with these fires. Then he laughed scornfully: "And the jester's daughter at the Stag, was she a witch too? And what of the young girls in the chapel?" Absorbed in such thoughts he entered a lonely foot-path, sank down on the trunk of a tree, and resting his head on his hands gazed mournfully into vacancy. "I was bewitched, bewitched," he sighed aloud.

"Every one is tempted when excited and lured by his own evil desires," said a grave voice beside him. The fugitive started up in terror; he feared he was losing his reason. But the Baptist was standing by him, and the priest stared helplessly into the weather-beaten face of the mysterious heretic. The latter quietly continued: "And when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and the wages of sin is death."

The young priest covered his pale face with his slender hands and sank back into his seat, bowing his head before the strange old man.

"I am sorry for you, Magister Laurenzano," the Baptist continued. "I have always believed you to be a valiant man, who might accomplish much good in the service of Our Lord by means of your great talents if you would cast off the cowl which has been thrown over you like a noose, and had sufficient courage to forswear the gloomy vows by which you have been entrapped. Bid farewell to the papists, take a wife since you have not strength to live as a monk, and maintain yourself honestly by the labor of your hands or the gifts of your head."

Laurenzano shook his head sorrowfully and a stifled sob escaped his lips.

"I can stay here no longer," said the old miller, "and men's tears do not produce wisdom. The bailiffs you set upon me are perhaps already at my heels, and my son is waiting for me up yonder. But I admonish you: if any peril comes to Erastus's daughter through old Sibyl's crazy accusation, you must stand forward and tell the judges that the poor child did not go up the mountain to seek Satan, but to meet you, her teacher, her pastor, her shepherd. If you haven't courage to do this, the Lord will demand this soul of you at the Judgment-Day. And secondly: we are all flesh and blood, and so ought not to judge each other, but if you continue to wear the cowl remember your duties better than you did in the convent, and when you next stand before children remember the words: 'Whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a mill-stone were hanged about his neck and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea.' And now farewell."

When Paul looked up again he found himself alone in the forest. Had his guardian angel appeared to him in the guise of the heretic, or had power been granted to this son of the devil to read his heart and detect its inmost secrets? The subterfuges in which he had taken refuge, the veil with which he had striven to hide his disgrace, the pretexts with which he had been in the act of concealing the ugly truth, had all been swept aside by this peasant's rude hand, and he stood revealed to himself the culprit he was. There was nothing more to be said,—no more excuses to offer. He was convicted. Sighing deeply he rose, wiped the tears from his face so that no one should see that he had been weeping and walked on in silent misery beneath the

lofty oaks and beeches bordering the high-road which he now reached. What should he do? Re-appear among the people below, who all knew his disgrace and would point at him? Fly to Speyer again, and in the crypt of the cathedral once more apply himself to the *exercitia* which had formerly given him peace for two weeks? Just at that moment he found himself standing by the deep pond at the entrance of the village, from which had been dragged more than one young creature who had preferred a watery grave to a seat on the stool of penitence and submission to the discipline of the Church. "It were better for him that he were drowned," Werner had said to him in the forest. He gazed with fixed eyes at the deep, black pool. "It were better for him," he murmured, "far, far better." He would only wait to let the little girl who was coming down the path pass by, then he would follow the Baptist's advice. "Fresh scandal must come, so this will be better."

The child he had seen ran joyously to meet him. "Oh! Herr Pastor," she cried, "how lucky it is that you are here, mother's fever is worse, and she is constantly weeping and asking us to find the minister and bring him to pray with her." Seizing his hand the child drew him towards the village, and he followed unresistingly as she led him into a small damp house.

"Oh! Herr Pastor, I shall be better now," said a voice from a little room, and the tall, pale man knelt beside the sick woman and began a prayer: "God desireth not the death of the sinner, but rather that he shall turn from his wickedness and live." He poured forth his own sorrow to the Lord, and while speaking to the sufferer realized himself that God's mercy was as boundless as the waters of the ocean and that He will

give us a foothold in the day of trouble when we think we are sinking. When he had finished speaking his own soul was calmer, and he sat quietly for some time beside the sick woman. Then he roused himself to bring from the abbey some medicines she needed and to attend to other patients. After many hours of eager self-sacrificing toil there came to him in the cool breath of the evening breeze as the moon rose calm and mild above the fir-clad mountains, the still message of peace that we do not atone for our sins by sleepless nights and lonely hours of torturing remorse, but in the active exercise of works of benevolence and care for others' welfare, so that the wounds we have healed may outnumber those we have dealt.

Several days, joyless but more peaceful than the preceding ones, had been spent by Paul in zealous, constant fulfilment of duty, when a message from the city again roused all the terrors of his conscience. He received through the village magistrate a summons to appear on the first day of the following week to give testimony as a former friend of Erastus before the magistrate in court concerning everything he knew about the relations that had existed between the ex-councillor and Parson Neuser, and the other Arians, as well as make his deposition about the religious belief and general behavior of Lydia, daughter of Erastus, who was about to be tried *in crimine maleficii*. The peace won by so hard a struggle utterly deserted him. Once more the brand of Cain burned on his brow, but he cared little for the insults and disgrace that must be heaped upon him during these public trials, compared with the terrible dread that he might have brought the most horrible doom upon the pure young creature to whom he had dared to

raise his sinful eyes. He was too thoroughly acquainted with the legal proceedings that threatened Lydia to be able to shake off the thought of her danger even for a moment. No sacrifice, no self-devotion, no ardent prayers in the presence of the congregation while conducting religious service in the House of God, or in the privacy of his own little room, would avail to exorcise this ghost, and even the simple villagers, who had hitherto clung to Paul with steadfast devotion, noticed the alteration in their pastor. Rumors of the incident in the Kreuzgrund spread abroad, and when on the last Sunday allotted for his stay he addressed the warmest words of farewell to the congregation that the state of his mind permitted, his hearers' distrust of him was stronger than their memory of his good deeds. When at noon he went for the last time to visit one and another, he received in many a household only brief thanks and a cold farewell, for the women whispered to each other that his miracles had been performed by the help of Satan, and the reason he was going about with such a troubled face was because the devil had recently appeared one night to demand his soul as the price agreed upon. A feeling of unutterable bitterness filled the young priest's heart. Had not he moved among these people as a guardian angel, had not his wisdom saved them when they were quarrelling among themselves, his love watched over them while they slept, his devotion sustained them when they grew weary? And their gratitude was to hiss: "the devil helps him." Yet, after all, who had bid him to work miracles? The means had been effectual, but he had had his reward in the result of the first impression. Such were the thoughts that passed through his unquiet, oppressed heart as he

tossed sleeplessly on his couch all the last night of his stay, and before dawn he rose and set out alone on his weary walk to Heidelberg. But if he had expected to pursue his way in solitude he was disappointed. Several groups of peasants, all pressing towards the city, overtook him in the woods. There was evidently something to be seen there, for the people were hurrying to pass each other and from their talk Laurenzano learned that they were disputing about the place which afforded the best view of the sight so well worth witnessing. A vague dread that it might be Lydia's execution seized upon him. Tortured by presentiments of evil, he, too, quickened his steps, yet he did not venture to ask any of the numerous pedestrians what was going on in Heidelberg, fearing that they might laugh in his face and say: "Who should know better than you, fiendish priest?" Then he perceived that a tall man dressed in black was at his heels and kept close behind him. If he walked rapidly, the stranger quickened his pace; if slowly, the other checked his steps. Paul glanced back several times and saw that the person following him was clad in black velvet, wore a black cap, and had a full black beard and an erect, military bearing. Was it an emissary of Pigavetta, or could the magistrate have sent this soldier to keep watch that he did not escape? The thought roused his pride, he raised his head haughtily and walked with a measured pace towards Heidelberg, whose towers already appeared before him at a bend in the road. On reaching the highway by the river Laurenzano noticed that the throngs of peasants increased, and as even now his companion did not lose sight of him annoyance overpowered him, and stopping he asked the intrusive stranger in the most indifferent

tone he could assume : " Is the witch to be burned to-day, that the people thus crowd into the city ? "

A glance that seemed both familiar and unfamiliar met his eyes from beneath the soldier's bushy black brows, then the latter with a slight touch of contempt answered : " You must have a very good conscience, young sir, since you carry your head higher than many of us venture to do. I'm glad of it. As for the witch, she is to be tortured to-day and burned to-morrow ; to-day they will execute a heretic, Inspector Sylvanus, who has blasphemed against God and Christ . . . but you are turning pale, young man, is anything the matter ? "

" Nothing, nothing, " murmured Paul, " it will pass off. "

" Well, there are some pains that will not pass away, a worm that dieth not, a fire that is not quenched. The Ladenburg pastor was a great sinner and a weak man, but I would rather change places with him than with the person who delivered him to the scaffold and forestalled the judge, perhaps before the reckless mortal found opportunity for repentance and conversion. What do you think ? "

Paul moved on as if in a dream ; the earth seemed rolling to and fro under his feet as though he were walking on clouds, he saw the convent on his left hand and the castle on his right dancing before him, while in his ears there was a rushing, roaring, surging sound as if he were in the depths of the sea. " I don't know, " he faltered as his companion's eagle glance rested on him imperiously demanding an answer.

" You don't know ? Oh, then I can be of service to you, " said the stranger. " The pastor who is to be executed to-day was talking with some boon com-

panions in a tavern tap-room, and in their intoxication they said things that they did not mean. But near by sat a disguised Jesuit, who listened to them and reported what they said to the elector in order to curry favor with the sovereign. The elector's physician, Erastus, who had nothing to do with these scandals, was also entangled in the affair by his enemies, who slipped among Neuser's papers a forged letter Erastus had never written. So half a dozen men with their innocent wives and children are plunged into ruin. What do you think of the spy?"

"He will repent it," faltered Paul.

"Repent," replied the other. "The only true repentance is atonement. But the traitor seems far from any thought of that; he holds his head high, though he has another burden to carry compared to which his treachery to the clergymen was child's play. Has anything of the sort ever come to your knowledge, young man?" and again a fiery side glance was darted at the Magister who moved on by his side like a person in a dream. "The Jesuit whom you don't know played the rôle of a Protestant pastor, and in this guise stole the heart of a young inexperienced child whom he allured to meet him on a cross-road at night. She was caught in the notorious place, branded as a witch, and is now about to encounter torture and death. But instead of going to the elector and saying: 'The child is innocent, I am the tempter, it was I who brought her there, not the devil, I alone am Satan, torture me, burn me' — instead of doing what honor and conscience demanded, the monster moves about with head erect and carelessly asks the first passing stranger: 'Is the witch to be burned to-day?'"

Paul staggered like a drunken man. "Indeed I will, I am on my way . . ." he stammered.

"You will, you are on your way," replied the soldier, "that is quite a different matter. No one could suppose so, who heard your question; but I forgot that you were taught dissimulation in your earliest youth. I thought you were on the road to Speyer again."

Paul gazed at him in horror. "Who are you that know everything?" he asked, a thrill of superstitious horror creeping over him.

"I'll show you that I believe in your resolutions of amendment," said the other. "Perhaps it will strengthen your determination if I confide in you." The stranger's cap fell, he held the black beard in his hand, and the Baptist Werner stood before Paul Laurenzano, whose eyes filled with tears.

"Don't weep, my young friend," said the old man gently. "You must be hard, hard as iron, to accomplish what is demanded of you. And to prove that I expect from you no more than I am willing to perform myself, summon me if my testimony can be of any use to the poor young girl. You need only send to old Elsner by the haymarket the watchword: 'He who testifies in water needs him,' then she will notify me and I'll come if it costs me my head." Paul held out his hand to his strange companion.

"Forgive me for attacking you so harshly," said the latter, "but your question pierced me to the heart. I know now that you will not sacrifice Lydia."

"I have robbed you of house and home too," faltered Paul.

"Don't grieve over that. Whosoever is homeless has

a home everywhere, and the harder it rains the sooner it will stop. I shall go for the present to brethren across the Rhine and when the grapes are ripe I shall probably be back in my mill again." Paul warmly pressed the horny hand of the old man, who pointed to the bridge, while he himself pursued the road along the river.

Paul had just passed the bridge-gate when a bell in the tower of the Heiligengeistkirche began to toll. It had a peculiar shrill sound, as if it were cracked, yet it could be heard a long distance; it did not announce in gentle tones God's greeting of peace, but pierced the heart like a knife and the young priest covered his ears with both hands to escape hearing it, for he recognized this passing-bell which was proclaiming to the world Sylvanus' last journey. Then he regained his composure though his face was deadly pale, and went on to the market-place which he was obliged to cross to reach the castle before Lydia's trial began. But on arriving at the square it was useless to think of passing through the throngs of people. Trying to pursue his way Paul became entangled in the crowd and was pushed nearer and nearer to the scaffold between the church and the town-hall, where the peasants of the neighboring parishes had been stationed under the leadership of their pastors, and beyond a company of lansquenets barred the way. He could no longer return, there was no escape from witnessing the horrible spectacle for which he himself was at fault. The deafening roll of drums and the shrill notes of fifes announced the approach of the criminal. "Is that tall emaciated figure clad in penitential garb who stands beside the stout pastor, the florid joyous-hearted Inspector

of Ladenburg, and by all the Saints! why is the child, the nine-year-old boy there?" The men between whom Paul was wedged stared in amazement at the priest, who while uttering his vehement words stretched his hands despairingly towards the scaffold as if to aid the prisoner.

"Why, sir, nothing is to be done to the child," replied one of the citizens. "But as he was allowed to stay with his heretical father to the last, the members of the consistory ordered that he should witness the execution, so that if he had been secretly contaminated by the false doctrine he might see whither it leads."

Paul was about to answer, but the musicians began a choral melody and the congregation under their pastor's leadership sang the hymn: "The Holy Spirit now we pray the true faith to bestow."

Then the pastor's powerful voice rose, imploring God to keep the community in the right faith. "Your right faith," hissed Laurenzano. The reverend gentleman then bore witness that Sylvanus heartily repented his blasphemies and died a devout Christian, glad to atone by his blood for the disgrace which he had brought upon God's teachings which, tempted by Satan, he had trampled under foot. So it was to be hoped that the Lord would pardon his sins, and since he had expiated them here in the flesh that his soul would be saved on the Day of Judgment.

"Judge not, judge not," murmured Laurenzano, talking to himself like a madman.

He saw Sylvanus led forward to confess his repentance before the people, but the once powerful orator now spoke in a faint, almost inaudible voice; then he kissed his son who clung despairingly to him. The

clergyman drew the child towards him, and the executioner dragged Sylvanus to the block. Paul closed his eyes; he could look at the horrible spectacle no longer.

"I have robbed this boy of his father," he cried aloud, "I have killed this child." A shriek from the throng, a murmur of thousands of voices proclaimed that the blow had fallen. When Laurenzano glanced at the scaffold, he saw only the insensible boy being carried away. At the same moment the musicians began to play again. "Thou precious light, Thy rays bestow," the peasants sang at the top of their voices. Laurenzano was overpowered by a dull despair. "You, you alone have done this!" a voice echoed in his ears. "Cain, Cain," the tiles on the roof seemed to shout. He scarcely noticed how the ranks around him were melting away. Before he was aware of it he was standing alone amid a group of the roughest and most blood-thirsty ruffians in the crowd, just in front of the scaffold which was being cleansed from Sylvanus' blood. A feeling of dull despair paralyzed his limbs. His guilt had towered mountain-high above him, while he had thought he was serving God. Who had shed this blood which the executioner was washing away? Who had thrust Erastus into prison? Who had cast Clytia into the witch's tower? He, he alone. Wherever he looked, this Gorgon head confronted him. Whatever he heard referred to the misery he had wrought. Of whom was the whole city talking save him and his deeds? Oh! why had he not had courage to drown himself that day at Schöнау? A madman's laugh escaped his lips. The sound of the passing-bell again echoed in his ears, mingled with some of the Baptist's words that suddenly darted through his brain. . . . now the musicians at

the Stag are playing fairest Gabrielle. "Down, down to the Neckar, there is rest," cried a secret voice. Just at that moment the shout of a drunken peasant lad fell upon his ears, startling him like a thunderbolt out of his dull reverie.

"Come, Maier, let's go hear the witch sing out."

"Pshaw, that isn't worth while," replied the man addressed, a red-haired evil-looking fellow.

"Yes, it's fine fun when they shout and laugh in their agony."

The young priest roused himself, cast a wild despairing glance towards heaven, and then followed the rough youths who were walking rapidly towards the witch's tower. A narrow alley led to the old city-wall, the so-called rampart, beside which and behind the Augustine monastery, rose the frowning and sullen witch's tower. Here Paul saw dense throngs of people gathered, all gazing up at a window in the turret. A scream like a wild beast's cry rang on the air, followed by piteous moans. "Oh! can the angelic child have been brought to this," cried the despairing voice of Paul's conscience.

"Hear how she sings!" jeered red-haired Maier, and his companions laughed; but the next instant the rude fellows were hurled aside by a furious hand and a tall black-robed man darted up the tower stairs, pushing away with a madman's strength the soldiers who guarded the door. Guided by the shrieks of agony ringing from above he hurried upward. The door was reached, but all was now still as death. He knocked—no answer—he shook the lock frantically. "Directly, directly!" called a harsh voice from within. At last the door was opened, and Paul distinguished in the dusky

chamber the squat figure of the half-naked executioner and his assistants.

"She is innocent, I'll bear witness for her, where are the judges?" stammered the breathless young priest.

"You come too late, the devil has just taken the witch to himself," replied Meister Ulrich with a rude laugh, opening the window-shutters, and Laurenzano saw a brown, shrivelled body stretched upon the rack. The executioner roughly seized the head, turning the face on one side and Paul beheld the pale distorted features of the herb-woman from the Kreuzgrund.

"Where is Lydia?" he stammered.

"She's in the castle with her father," sneered the executioner. "She was too dainty a morsel for us. The members of the commission on witchcraft are still at breakfast. It's all paid for out of the witch's money. If you mean to testify in favor of that milk-faced girl, wait an hour or two and then make your deposition before them."

At this moment the door opened and Pigavetta entered. "You here, Magister," he said, looking at Laurenzano in surprise, but quickly recovering his composure, "I expected to see you at the castle." He then advanced close to him and added in a whisper: "So much the better. I'll speedily tell you what you must say, and if necessary swear to."

"Avaunt, Satanas!" cried Paul loudly, dealing a blow at the traitor's breast; but the agile Italian quickly stepped to one side and Laurenzano staggered forward against the wall.

"Is *that* the way matters stand?" muttered Pigavetta. "Meister Ulrich, put this man in the stocks at once and see that no one gets admittance to him."

"What, traitor!" cried Paul, rushing furiously upon Pigavetta. But at the same moment he was dragged backward while Pigavetta himself closed his mouth. His legs were drawn over a beam, and his feet thrust into two apertures closed by having a second beam let down upon them. Then his arms were pressed into a similar beam, fastened in the same way.

"There, now look at the witch yonder," said Pigavetta with cold emphasis, "and these pleasing instruments of torture and consider what the consequence of your witchcraft and magic in Schöнау will be, if you don't listen to reason." Then he coolly turned his back upon him. The executioner locked the windows of the witch's prison and left Paul alone with the old woman's corpse.

CHAPTER XXV.

PAUL lay in the dark still torture-chamber in a sort of stupor. Spite of his uncomfortable position he leaned his head against the beam blackened by age and blood-stains, and sank into a condition that might be called half sleep, half faintness. But the songs of the heavenly hosts echoed in his ears, and his soul was filled with a deep sense of bliss in being permitted to suffer and atone for the many sins he had committed. Gradually his dreamy thoughts became more coherent and he resolved to profit by any examination, either before the judges or on the rack, to assist in the liberation of Erastus and his daughter. It was fortunate that he was

here. Now he must be heard. Pigavetta himself with all his power could not make him disappear without leaving any trace. The most terrible tortures would be most welcome to him, if he could but pronounce upon himself the words of absolution: "Thou hast atoned, thou art forgiven." His dull, dreamy condition was just passing into real slumber, when a long, deep sigh from the rack roused him from his sleep. He looked up and saw old Sibyl's dim eyes fixed intently upon him.

"Are you not dead yet, Mother?" he said gently and kindly to the expiring witch.

"So it is really you!" replied the old woman hoarsely. "They tortured me so that I thought my brain had become confused, and I fancied I saw what I wished. For I did wish you might come to the torture, wished it with curses, and now that you are here I am too weak and weary to rejoice. Ah!" and another long, deep sigh echoed through the dim, silent room.

"Why did you wish it specially to me?" asked Laurenzano.

The witch stared at him with her glassy, lifeless eyes. Then she gasped: "Didn't you guide them to me; who told you to prevent an old woman's escape?"

"Why did you have dealings with the devil?" answered the priest.

"There is no devil," said the old woman carelessly.

"No devil?" cried the priest. "You ought to be most sure of his existence, since you've often attended his accursed festivals at the cross-roads."

"I have been on the Holtermann and sat by the Linsenteich for thirty years, have crept at midnight into the Jettenhöhle, and tried all the conjurations my grandmother taught me, but everything remained still. Once,

a little while ago, I fancied I saw him, but it was only the miller's son playing his pranks."

"And you never went to drink and dance with fiends, and riot with the devil?"

"If I could do that should I be lying here?" said the witch scornfully. "I've repeated all the sayings just as they run: 'Here I stand upon the dung, denying Jesus with my tongue.' I sang Satan's own songs: 'Tarry, Satan, tarry, leap here, leap there, glide here, glide there, play here, play there,' or 'Dart in and out, touch naught about. Hie, upward and out, stay nowhere about.' It was all useless. I've prayed to the devil and lured the elves, but nothing stirred; it's all nonsense."

"Why did you not pray to God instead?"

"There is no God," said the old woman in the same indifferent tone.

"You are blaspheming," cried Paul angrily.

"You'll see whether He helps the fair-haired Lydia when they bring her here, and beat her with scourges, and burn her with sulphur And Erastus, and Xylander, and Pithopöus' daughter, and Probus' wife, and Chancellor Probus himself."

"What, you horrible wretch, have you accused them all?"

"They are as guilty as I am. At first I wanted to keep silence and made no answer, but they held my nose so that I was forced to open my mouth to breathe; then they pushed into my mouth an iron pear which they unscrewed, forcing open my jaws till I thought I should stifle. That's the way people are taught to speak."

"But why did you mention these names?"

“Well, the members of the commission asked one question after another, and I thought they would torture me less if I said yes. I heard the yellow-faced Italian say: ‘Notorious heretics are always probable wizards’ and they said ‘Probus,’ yes, no, ‘Xylander’ ‘Pithopöus,’ no, not he, ‘Erastus’ and so I caught up the names. It hurts to hang so, and they put heavier and heavier weights on my legs. You’ll learn how it is when they wrench your bones out of their sockets. At last I noticed that they went on as long as I answered, so I stopped and fixed my eyes upon the sallow-faced pastor. This made him uncomfortable and he went out. But the Italian was the worst, he ordered me to be stretched out here and put feathers dipped in sulphur under my arms and between my fingers and lighted them himself, till I confessed that Erastus had also danced on the Holtermann and jumped over the devil after Satan had taken the shape of a he-goat. Then they beat me till I feigned death. Old women are tough. We have little blood and need little, that’s why it lasts so long. They tortured my grandmother thirteen days.”

The witch’s words grew more and more indistinct. It seemed as if she were talking to herself as she poured forth her tales, sometimes unintelligibly, sometimes clearly. She muttered her experiences hastily, often giggling and laughing as she related how often she had sought the devil and never found him. Then, as if in apology, she said that people only wanted witches’ wares when they were prepared at the right hour and in the right place. She would not defraud her customers. If they paid a fair price, she must supply them with the real article, otherwise any one might sell their

trash. Her words became more and more confused and incoherent. The listener did not know whether she was raving or if her mind was only too clear. He shuddered with horror. Then her gasping words died away into a death-rattle; violent convulsions shook her shattered body, one more quiver and it was still. The herb-woman from the Kreuzgrund was now really a corpse.

Paul sat alone for hours in the stocks. His limbs had swollen and he was tortured by a violent headache and intolerable thirst, but he leaned his head against the beam, clammy with the sweat and blood of countless predecessors, and did not murmur. At last at evening he was roused from his fainting condition by a noise at the door, and when he looked up Pigavetta was standing before him.

"I hope, Magister, you have considered how foolishly you behaved this morning," said the Italian. "Accept this uncomfortable day in place of the *exercitia* which I should have been obliged to impose upon you for several weeks, and let us now discuss sensibly how you are to be rescued from this unpleasant position."

Paul neither spoke nor raised his head.

"You are to appear before the commission tomorrow," Pigavetta angrily continued. "Since you seem to be still in a very peculiar mood, I will spare you from coming forward as Erastus' accuser. But you must testify, with suitable mental reservations for aught I care, if that will soothe your conscience, that Erastus in private conversations has frequently spoken as if he shared the Unitarian belief, has denied the Holy Trinity, and praised the writings of Servetus and Blandrata.

You know as well as I do that he is really a heretic and therefore cannot be too severely punished. As for your silly appointment with his daughter, you need only say that you wanted to ascertain whether she really did go to the cross-roads at suspicious hours, as you had been told. It is fortunate that your presence in Speyer that very evening can be proved. The rector will testify that you were with him at ten o'clock. Do you agree? Answer!"

"Erastus never told me that he was an Arian," replied the prisoner curtly.

"That is of no consequence," said Pigavetta impatiently. "You know how many doctors of our Order permit what is probable to be certified as what is actual, if thereby we may avert the greater evil of allowing a criminal to escape unpunished and continue his raging against the Holy Church."

"I know that it is written: 'Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor,'" Paul calmly replied.

"Childish folly," cried Pigavetta angrily. "I command you *in obedientia majoris* to swear to this statement to-morrow. You have no responsibility, I take it on myself."

"No superior has removed the tortures of conscience I have endured," said Paolo, in a tone of gentle reproach. "I have felt that when a man carries hell in his breast all the blessings of the Church cannot restore his peace of mind. I cannot live with threefold or tenfold murder on my conscience. No priest's absolution would banish the spectres of Erastus and Lydia from my couch."

"You are in love," replied Pigavetta contemptuously.

Paul made no answer.

"There I can help you," continued the other lightly. "I'll have golden-haired Lydia brought here, then you can try your luck. Witches' trials often last for years, and you will have the fullest scope. She would not be the first who had been tamed in the witch's tower."

"Devil," answered Paul shuddering.

"Hark ye, my young puppy," said Pigavetta grinding his teeth, "my patience is getting exhausted. You know what the consequences of your disobedience will be. I won't speak of what the judges will do with your bones, that's your affair and theirs; but I can tell you what *we* shall do. The Order will expel you, and then do not believe that you will ever again find peace on earth. The sort of fellow you are is written in the archives of the Order, recorded by your own hand. Wherever you seek shelter, service, position, happiness, your own confessions will bear witness against you."

Paul raised his head and smiled. "That is all past, my good sir, give yourself no farther trouble; those fetters are broken. Since I no longer desire to pass for a saint, you may tell my sins to every one. What was it that terrified me so before? A boy's confessions! Tell the gentlemen in Venice that since through you I have had murder on my conscience, the ink with which I wrote my weekly confessions has faded; they can have them printed if they choose, and I will add the story of the services which under your direction I have done the Church."

"The Church expels you, accursed traitor."

"I have been expelled ever since I obeyed you," sighed Paul. "Since that time I have borne hell within my breast, and I now know that no priest's absolution

will place my name in the Book of Life if it is not already there, and no priest can efface it, if through God's mercy it is there recorded."

"So that's the way things stand!" said Pigavetta. "Have you come to heresy? Then if our Holy Church is no longer anything to you, look at this corpse. Do you wish to die in such tortures?"

"The tortures within," said Paolo, bending his head towards his heart, "will be lightened if you add the physical agonies inflicted by fire and steel. Spare your words, I have committed myself solely to God's mercy."

"Heretic," hissed Pigavetta. Paolo made no answer. The old Jesuit was trying to devise some other argument by which he could influence this young fool, but at that moment steps were heard approaching. The long interview seemed to Meister Ulrich suspicious and he put his head in at the door. Pigavetta turned to go. "If reasoning fails to enlighten you, this worthy man will try to bring you back to the right path by the aid of thumb-screws and Spanish boots."

"We'll twist him around till the sun shines through him," said the executioner laughing. The door closed and Paul was left alone in his suffering.

CHAPTER XXVI.

A RELIGIOUS discussion was going on in the new palace. The rector of the university, two professors of theology, and two jurists had entered the elector's

study to confer with each other on the question of Erastus's re-admission to the consistory and the revocation of the sentence of excommunication. After a time Erastus himself was brought from his prison across the court-yard. A deep blue September sky looked down on the cheerful square surrounded by palaces. The foliage of the lindens on the bastion was already turning yellow; asters were blooming in the flower-beds that surrounded the well, and in the espaliers the sparrows, true to their nature, were fighting over the bunches of ripening grapes. Erastus gazed long and joyously around him, inhaling in thirsty draughts the fresh delightful breath of liberty. Then he cast an astonished glance at the "new building," which through Felix's art had reached a splendor it had never before attained. "A capital fellow," he said approvingly, "in spite of his brother." Then he calmly ascended the well-known staircase leading to his sovereign's apartments, where the religious conference was to take place. Bachmann respectfully moved aside to let the released physician pass, but Erastus held out his hand to the haiduck as kindly as ever. The discussion within was long and eager. Bachmann weary of standing, sank down on a bench with a sigh saying: "It will be a good thing when our old councillors meet again. The new ones always stay three times as long," and he fell asleep. The worthy fellow had a chance to enjoy his doze thoroughly to the very end and then return to the waking state with the comfort which is the best part of a noon-day nap. To-day there was even time for him to get the stiffness out of his limbs by walking up and down, for the gentlemen inside seemed unable to come to any conclusion. At last he heard

tables and chairs moved aside. "God be praised," said Bachmann, "they did it thoroughly this time."

The five gentlemen came out together, the Rector Magnus with the air of dignity appropriate to his office, the jurists with a somewhat quizzical, almost malicious jollity, the theologians with long faces and unusually sallow skins. "The theological faculty always has precedence," said the rector with sarcastic courtesy. The two divines passed him and went downstairs without any form of salutation. "Is the conference ended?" Bachmann modestly asked the rector.

"Ended, like my departed aunt," replied the jovial gentleman.

"And Herr Erastus?" said the haiduck.

"Is again privy councillor, physician in ordinary, member of the consistory, just as he was before."

"Then may the merciful God in Heaven be thanked for it," cried Bachmann; "these foreigners were becoming insufferable. And the church-discipline?" he inquisitively added.

"Aha, you're thinking of your card-playing and beer-drinking at the Stag? Well, the best of the bad business is that Herr Olevianus is ordered to mix a considerable quantity of water with his wine. But I wouldn't advise you to rattle dice in the elector's ante-room."

While the gentlemen were jesting with the old servant, the elector was standing in his study, resting both hands on Erastus' shoulders as he asked gently: "Can you forgive me for wronging you, Erastus?"

"Your Highness only fulfilled your duty as father of your country," replied Erastus modestly. "I have nothing to forgive."

"Rest assured that only during these last few days have I thoroughly realized what a treasure I possess in you. These pietists are all hypocrites. Sorrowful as they pretended to be over your downfall, their secret triumph flashed through their ill-painted mask of grief. We owe the solution of the game not to them, but to the poor Italian crippled by torture."

"To him," said Erastus in astonishment, "he is the very man I believed to be the traitor."

"He may have been false in the beginning; but at the very first examination he told Pigavetta to his face that he, as his Superior in the Jesuit Order, had forced him to write the letter to Neuser which had been found among your papers, and offered to immediately indite a second that would be just as much like your handwriting. The test did not prove entirely convincing because the brave fellow's arm had swollen during his confinement in the stocks and his hand trembled. So they applied torture to the fourth degree, to extort from him a confession that you had tried to win him over to Arianism. He was also desired to own that he had gone with your daughter to the witches' sabbath on the Holtermann, and accomplished his miracles and cures in Schöнау by the Black Art. God knows who instructed the old witch, but she said just what your enemies wanted. She testified that at the last witches' sabbath on the Staffelstein near Bamberg she had seen a large black goat with fiery eyes, which came flying through the air from Heidelberg. Through the back part of the animal's body was stuck a long broom, on which sat all the foes of church discipline, Probus and his wife, you and your fair-haired child, Xylander and his maid-servant, and Pithopöus and his five lank daughters. She also said

that on the Holtermann, at the three oaks, the hollow chestnut-tree, the Linsenteich, and wherever else the demons hold their revels, she had seen you carouse with Satan, and on the very last St. John's eve you were baptized with blood, sulphur, and salt, and after the baptism the devil assumed the form of a he-goat and you were all obliged to leap over him in turn."

"And these gentlemen could believe all this absurd nonsense!" said Erastus drooping his head mournfully.

"They believed it so firmly that nothing but the young Jesuit's martyr-like courage could have saved you. A true hero! The protocol, whose perusal I will spare you, seems like the record of the sufferings of the martyrs. I am an old man, but I cried like a child when I read what the poor youth had undergone. Though they poured aqua-vitæ on his back and lighted it, and wrenched his limbs out of their sockets, he steadfastly maintained his statement that the old witch just before her death had retracted to him everything she had said and told him that she only accused you all to please the members of the commission. He also asserted that in the middle of the night the executioner came into the room and twisted the old hag's head round to her back, in order to be able to say that the devil had killed her. But he had distinctly recognized Meister Ulrich and plainly heard the cracking of the bones. The theologians were so baffled that they wanted to torture him still more severely, but the jurists finally appealed to the regular course of the law and said that no farther torture should be applied until fresh evidence against him was found. I now learned for the first time how the case stood, and of course instantly

dismissed Hartmanni from his office and ordered Pigavetta's arrest. The soldiers found the Italian in his room, in the act of packing his effects, so he had probably perceived that his game was up. But they foolishly allowed him to go into the next room to change his clothes, and of course he did not return. In this room they discovered an open shaft with a pulley, which let him down in an instant to the lower story near the door. He is said to have played all sorts of tricks by means of this shaft, and other secret apparatus and books of magic were found. If he is captured, let him beware of the stake. He won't have tortured Laurenzano so shamefully for nothing if I can only catch him."

"Poor young fellow," sighed Erastus.

"I was just going to ask you to do something for him. The young Lazarus is still lying in the tower, as the hospital surgeon I sent to him says that he cannot be moved. You are a master in your profession. My conscience would be much lighter if you could only patch him up again. I will provide for his future."

Erastus promised, and then asked permission for his daughter to return home with him.

"That is a matter of course," replied the elector. "She is acquitted and freed from farther prosecution. The theologians indeed said something about imposing a penance for rambling on the Holtermann at night, but the others replied that if Lydia had dared the danger for her father's sake she deserved praise from the pulpit, and if the young priest had turned her head for a day she had been punished more than enough by the terror she had endured."

"But it would be a great satisfaction to me," said

Erastus, "if Your Highness would expressly tell the judges that Lydia must not be watched as a suspicious person, which usually occurs after this unfortunate accusation."

"I will," the elector answered. "Your child shall be as free as the deer in the forest."

"I thank Your Highness. Now I shall really enjoy my liberty."

Soon after father and daughter walked hand in hand out of the dark gateway of the thick tower across the sunny court-yard to the new building. Clytia gazed proudly at the work Felix had accomplished, and when she found her little room aloft aired and decked with fragrant flowers, she asked herself why her thoughts clung so fixedly to the cell of the imprisoned priest whose fate was solely due to himself, while Felix's tokens of love had followed her everywhere, even through the walls of the thick tower. He had even risked his young life to rescue her, as Frau Belier had whispered to her during one of her visits. Yet her eyes rested with a cold, indifferent look on the bouquet, as she asked in a hollow tone: "Where are you going to take him?"

"Ah, the Magister you mean? I think Belier will not refuse to act the part of the Good Samaritan. The patient can easily bear to be carried that short distance, and he will find better nursing nowhere."

"Well, then I will run over to Frau Belier's and get everything ready." She darted down the stairs, and the physician shaking his head set out to visit his patient, who according to the elector's report had been at once his betrayer and his preserver. The poor fellow had been terribly punished, but even now Erastus

could not forgive the peril to which he had exposed Lydia.

CHAPTER XXVII.

PAUL LAURENZANO lay in the house on the market-place to recover from his dangerous wounds under the faithful care of Erastus and Frau Belier. "The burns are severe but not fatal," the physician said to Herr Belier after the patient had been put to bed in a quiet little room far above the noise of the street. "When two-thirds of the skin remains uninjured as in this case, the sufferer usually recovers. The joints are wrenched, but not broken. He is young and will survive, but he must be a burden on you for some time if the consequences are not to last all his life."

"No Huguenot regards a man who has been unjustly persecuted as a burden," replied the Frenchman. "We know from experience what duty requires."

Frau Belier cast the first friendly glance at Felix that she had bestowed upon him since her parrot's sorrowful end, and said: "We'll soon set the poor young fellow on his feet again."

"I shall have time to assist you, noble lady," answered the architect, "I have been dismissed from my work on the castle."

"What! How ungrateful!" exclaimed Frau Belier and the others in the same breath.

"The elector must have learned to whom the reverend Pastor Neuser — though through a *qui pro quo* — owes his escape. He paid me and at the same time

asked for the plans of the castle, intimating that owing to the suspicious circumstances attending Neuser's flight all strangers would be obliged to leave the castle."

"I cannot blame His Highness," said Erastus. "He has a gentle nature; Spring itself is not milder. He has punished even Pastors Suter and Vehe only by exile, and would have pardoned Neuser; but it is fitting that he should not tolerate arbitrary interference with his measures. Our friend would probably have to pay more dearly for his acrobatic exercises, if the kind-hearted prince were not weary of punishing, so that he passes Paul's sufferings to his daring brother's credit."

"He is just like me," replied Felix with a smiling side glance at the plump hostess. "If I had not appeased my Neapolitan blood-thirstiness on the parrot, neither this Hartmann Hartmanni, nor Pigavetta, nor Meister Ulrich would be alive."

"Private justice is not needed in this country, my dear friend," said Erastus. "Pigavetta will be legally tried. The magistrate is suspended *ab officio*, and the other scoundrels will receive a severe punishment for their misdeeds."

"If that would only make Paul's limbs sound again," replied Felix sighing.

"Stay with us and watch over your brother, Meister Laurenzano," said Belier. "You can have a little room close by your beloved invalid, and there work at your plans for my new house. That is a quiet, thoughtful occupation and will not disturb the sick man, and on the other hand the stillness of the sick-room will be favorable to your muse. So design the façade in which you wish to vie with the late Count Palatine's edifice,

of course so far as a plain citizen's dwelling may venture to rival a prince's palace."

"Consent!" cried Frau Belier, "here is my hand in token of reconciliation. There shall be no more blood between us. I forgive you for my poor parrot's death."

The architect, with a look of comic contrition, clasped the plump little hand. "I can have no masses read for the soul of one thus cut off in the flower of youth," he said, "but he shall be immortalized on the façade; I will erect a monument to him in spite of many a Count Palatine."

While the friends were thus jesting together and forming plans for the future, Clytia slipped softly away. After the sore affliction of the last few days gayety jarred upon the gentle girl, and she joined the nurse upstairs to sit in the little room beside Paul and listen to his labored breathing, his delirious ravings. Paul's mind was still far, far away from the present. His eyes glittered like a prophet's, a feverish glow flushed his cheeks, and an almost supernatural beauty illumined his ideally perfect features. His lips moved incessantly, it seemed as if the social impulses repressed by the reserved man for so many years had burst all barriers, and in this revolution of his mental and physical life the long distant impressions of early childhood had come uppermost. He usually talked to his mother addressing her by the tenderest pet names. "Indeed I won't tell lies any more," he said in the sincere accents of a child, bringing tears to Clytia's eyes. Clytia herself, in his delirious fancies, was always his sister. "I really didn't mean to hurt Lydia, mother," he said. "I only wanted to kiss her. Is there any harm in that?"

Then he tossed restlessly on his bed. "If I only need not go back to that hateful school. But I'll pretend to be as stupid as hunchbacked Bernardo, then they'll surely expel me and say they can make no use of me." After a pause he would call loudly: "But mother says I must never deceive again." Strangely enough, the horrors of the last few days appeared to have left no traces on his memory. Once, however, he said: "It is very fortunate that they beat me so, now it is all settled and no one can reproach me for anything." Usually all disagreeable impressions were associated with the school in Venice. Pigavetta was a cross teacher, the executioner Ulrich was the "brother corrector," the members of the consistory were the college professors, but all recollection of the present seemed entirely effaced from his memory. Only once, while Felix was sitting beside him, it seemed to return and with an expression of the most terrible anxiety he cried: "Save the pastors." Felix stooped and whispered in his ear: "I have rescued Neuser and the others are pardoned."

"Oh!" sighed the sufferer as if relieved from a heavy burden, and giving his brother a look of the most touching gratitude. From this moment his restlessness gradually lessened and the tense expression of his features vanished, extreme weakness taking its place. As soon as he woke the nurse brought him food and his wounds were newly bandaged, after which he instantly relapsed into slumber.

Felix had established his work-table near Paul's sick-bed and worked silently and industriously at his plans for Herr Belier's house. Whenever her duties to her father permitted, Clytia took her seat in the chamber between them and Frau Belier often teased her with

the question towards which room her heart really drew her? Paul's presence indeed exercised its old silent charm upon Clytia's gentle nature, but without diminishing her gratitude and cordial friendship towards Felix. She shared the latter's anxiety about his brother, and neither thought of what was to happen after Paul's recovery. Only Felix was becoming more and more aware that his love for the fair girl was only an artist's admiration. His bold nature required a counterpart of equal courage, which could oppose greater vivacity and more capacity for resistance than Erastus's gentle daughter possessed. The daily skirmishes with Frau Belier in which he sought to bend her will to his, like two children who clasp hands to force each other down, gave his intellect more diversion than any quiet, thoughtful conversation with the German girl. Yet on the other hand he watched Lydia with an artist's delight as she sat quietly at her sewing, thinking of the past and the future. There could be no lovelier picture of a womanly nature absorbed in the sweet dream of youthful love. The brow deep in reverie, the lips pouted as if to kiss, the blooming cheeks, and full, rounded figure, on which Nature had lavishly bestowed every charm, presented a vision of perfect beauty which was absolutely irresistible to Felix's artist-soul. One day he softly brought out a lump of modelling-clay, and while Lydia sat working unsuspectingly by the window, listening dreamily to the sick man's breathing, the young architect kneaded the plastic material and soon created a faithful likeness of the musing girl. He shaped the base into the calix of a flower as he had seen antique busts finished in Rome and Florence. The fragrant calix into which Clytia sank was intended to symbolize

the dreamy flower-life of young love, the sweet, pre-sageful fragrance of a pure woman's nature, whose life partly resembles that of a plant. Lydia's attention was at last attracted by the artist's constantly looking at her and then stepping aside, apparently to continue some unusual piece of work. She rose and a frown of maidenly displeasure darkened her girlish brow as she beheld a too faithful portrait of her charms.

"Fie, how unseemly," she murmured blushing.

But the artist entreated her so earnestly to resume her seat and let him go on that she yielded.

"What else can I do for him," she thought sadly, "since my heart is the other's?"

The artist now scanned her features intently, saying: "God never created anything more beautiful than you are." When he had finished his work he clapped his hands exclaiming repeatedly: "Splendid, splendid!"

Clytia softly approached him. "What do those leaves signify?"

"I am representing you as the goddess of flowers," replied Felix joyously.

"As *Wegewarte*?" and she looked up with a melancholy smile.

But Felix pressed a kiss on her pure brow, saying: "As Clytia, turning towards her sun-god."

The young girl with a grateful look held out her hand, which he clasped as if bidding her farewell. Without exchanging another word, they understood each other. Clytia was free, Felix had released her from her promise.

She now went more frequently than ever to the sick man's couch, cooled his head with wet cloths, and changed his bandages with a woman's deft, gentle hand.

So the last sunny autumn days passed peacefully away, leaving upon all the inhabitants of the gable-house the impression that there was something beautiful even in the stillness of a sick-chamber, where nothing was heard save the patient's regular breathing, the ticking of the great Nuremberg clock in the ante-room, and the buzzing of the flies against the leaden-cased window-panes reflecting the sunshine. But slight as was the change that had occurred in the external relations of the members of the little circle, Erastus felt the magnetic deviation that had occurred in Lydia. Wearied by numerous visits, he sat down one afternoon with his daughter near the chapel on the other side of the bridge to enjoy with genuine appreciation the last sunny hours of the year. The Heidelberg woods, dyed with the gold and scarlet hues of autumn, lay before them, their hazy outlines, blue and indistinct, fading away like an obscure tradition in the light autumn mist which magnified the size of the mountains. Beside the bench where they sat the hardy blue wayside flowers were still blooming, turning their calixes towards the sun. Lydia gathered one, thinking the while of the world of experiences through which she had passed since Felix had related Ovid's fable. Her father gazed earnestly at her. "Have you broken your engagement to Felix?" he asked.

"Felix will remain a Papist," replied Lydia evasively. "He cannot fulfil the condition you imposed."

"I will release him from it," said Erastus. "Are we not all Papists, now that we have Olevianus for Pope, execute heretics, and suffer theologians to arrogate to themselves not only the power of the sovereign, but that of the master of the house and father of the

family? Scarcely a trace remains of the liberty Luther and Zwingli sought to establish."

"Then you will allow me to marry a Catholic?"

"What right should I have to forbid it? Whenever I cross the square on which my friend's blood was shed, the stones cry out: 'Hypocrite, in what are you better than the Caraffas.' The *officium* of the Calvinists has made me tolerant towards index and inquisition."

"And will you be equally tolerant if I marry Paul?" asked Lydia timidly.

Erastus looked at her in astonishment. "What? Have you not turned your heart from him, though he has brought misery on us all?"

"Ask this flower why it follows the course of the sun?" said Lydia. "It cannot do otherwise."

"But how can you prefer this gloomy priest, this pale-faced man with his broken health, to the upright, blithe young artist?"

"I don't know," replied the young girl thoughtfully. "Love has deeper roots than any motives drawn from reason. In what does it consist? In the very fact that I *do* love him, that I cannot break the bond between us. I am not his because he is handsomer, wiser, better than others, but because I cannot live without him, because he is my sun without whom I should wither as this flower does in winter," and she quietly wiped away the tears that filled her eyes.

"He has suffered too severely in our behalf for me to say no," replied Erastus after a few moments' reflection. "God has so ordained it, His will be done."

CHAPTER XXVIII.

THE sick man in the gable-house had slowly regained his consciousness. His wounds still ached and every movement caused him fresh suffering, but he endured all his pain with the calmest patience, answering all his brother's enquiries with a pleasant glance and the words "*sta bene.*" Clytia too, who continued to nurse him though with a slight shade of embarrassment in her manner, he greeted with friendly, grateful looks.

In his present state of weakness not only the passionate, violent impulses of his nature, but all his acquired traits of character seemed to have left him, he had never been so simple and kindly ; everything artificial, all his flourishes and fine phrases had vanished. The brilliant personality of the Italian scholar, which diffused the lustre of eloquence over the most insignificant thought and was fond of expressing the most commonplace idea in the form of an epigram, had given place to a poor, suffering mortal. This invalid was no longer the *primus omnium* of the college at Venice, whose mouth overflowed with wisdom. There was something childlike in his helplessness. He maintained a modest reserve, though the interest of all was centred upon him. His gratitude for every service rendered, his respect for Belier and Erastus, the deferential attention with which he listened to them, made him seem like a mere boy, and for the first time his real youth be-

came apparent. When Frau Belier at the sight of his wounds burst into exclamations of passionate indignation, he answered calmly :

"I was ready to do just the same to people better than I am, noble lady, and for crimes less doubtful than mine."

He only took part in the conversation when questioned, but liked to listen while Erastus and Herr Belier argued about church discipline, or Felix and the mistress of the house disputed over some trifle while Lydia glided quietly through the room like a sunbeam, and with her unassuming activity tinged the whole circle with the color and beauty of her individuality. When Paul at last, supported by Erastus and Felix, was led to an arm-chair and permitted daily to spend several hours in the family circle, they expected that his former originality and intellectual superiority would again appear. But he remained quiet, gentle, and apparently as much oppressed in spirit as before. At last his resignation roused Felix's anxiety. It was so little in harmony with Paul's impetuous character that the young architect said to himself: "His limbs will get sound again, Erastus is right there, but he will remain utterly broken-spirited like the few victims that I saw in Rome whose lives had been spared by the Inquisition."

"I don't like to have you so wise and sensible," he said one day when the whole party had been pouring out their wrath about some fresh interference by the theologians, while Paul quietly and gently tried to put their intentions in a better light. "It seems as if you could no longer rebuke wrong."

"It may be so," replied the invalid. "I see no errors committed that I might not have committed my-

self. What shall we learn from our mistakes, if not indulgence towards others?"

But since Paul had grown so reserved, Clytia had also become a different creature. She moved quietly and silently about, apparently satisfied with being able to serve him, to supply every want, but the happy smile of childhood had vanished from her face. Felix who was working at her marble bust noticed, when she sat for him, a melancholy expression in her reverie which had not before existed.

"She looks like some young widow, sorrowfully recalling her former happiness. But I'll drive out the foolish children's insufferable reserve and self-sacrifice." One day the artist found what he considered a favorable opportunity. His brother was sitting alone at the window of his little oak-wainscoted room, gazing longingly through the round panes over the gable-roofed houses towards the Heiligenberg, as if counting each separate pine-tree that stood forth in strong relief against the background of white clouds.

"Are you thinking out some new system of philosophy, Paolo," he cried quizzically, "that you stare fixedly for hours at the blue October sky?"

"I see no need for one," replied Paul calmly. "True philosophy is resignation and life itself teaches that."

"Who bids you be resigned? You and Lydia seem to have entered into a compact of mutual self-sacrifice."

A fiery flush suddenly crimsoned Paolo's pale face.

"Why do you hide yourself behind the clouds, you languishing Apollo, and leave your flower to grieve? Must I take her by the hand and lead her to you?"

Paul stirred as if in pain. "You want to sacrifice yourself, dear Felix, but how could I permit it?"

"Sacrifice?" said the architect, pushing his Raphael cap jauntily on one side. "We artists are sad sinners. Since I have modelled Clytia's lovely face, since I caught the sweet expression hovering around her lips and prisoned it firmly in marble, as we stick a pin through a captured butterfly, she has released my soul from her thrall, after the manner that an inspiration deserts me when I have successfully accomplished any task, nay I feel as if I had had quite enough of the dear child. I dream of a less gentle, less yielding creature, a Neapolitan woman with a hooked nose, black eyes, and sharp nails in her fore-paws. In short, I want to paint Clytia on a church-standard for the Scalzi, but I'd just as soon think of marrying the Madonna. I need a wife with whom I can quarrel."

Paolo shook his head mournfully. "Even if it were so, how can a man sullied by suspicion, crippled by torture, a walking corpse, hold out his arms to this sweet young life. It would be a crime."

A fair head now bent down to him, fresh warm lips were pressed upon his pale mouth. "I will care for no one save this invalid," said a low faltering voice.

"Lydia!" cried Paul in ecstasy. "You are willing to bind your happy life to a cripple's."

"I shall make him as well and lively as a squirrel in the tree-top," laughed Clytia joyously.

The sunshine of happiness suddenly illumined the sick man's pallid face. The artist went back to his studio, turned the bust face to the wall, and began to work eagerly upon the façade of Herr Belier's new house.

“ So you have really chosen the Papist, the foreigner, for the companion of your life ?” asked Erastus shaking his head gravely, when on the following morning Clytia, clinging to Paul’s arm, told her father of their resolve.

“ His country shall be my country, and his God my God,” replied Clytia with such heartfelt joy that Erastus could find no words of objection.

“ I did not wish to mix the affairs of this world with those of the next,” Paul now said modestly, “ or I should have told you that I shall not return to the old jurisdiction. I used to be infuriated against your Church for having broken altars and desolated sanctuaries ; but you have one advantage over us, you have no slaves. Besides, dogma is no longer so important to me as it used to be. Each of us fought zealously for the right doctrine, but in the present shattering of views and opinions who can tell us which doctrine *is* right ? You for its sake persecuted the Baptists and Arians. The Calvinists persecuted you, the natives of the Palatinate hate both Zwinglians and Lutherans. I, however, hated all — Baptists, Zwinglians, Lutherans, and Calvinists. We have all dipped our hands in blood for the honor of the very God who commanded : ‘ Thou shalt not kill.’ If we pursue this course the wails of the tortured and the blood of the slain will soon cry out to Heaven from this fair land, as they do in France and the Netherlands, and what that means we can only realize when we have tested it in our own persons. We must face death in its most terrible form, to learn how few are the principles for which we are ready to sacrifice our lives. As I was lately pondering in prison over the thought : ‘ Who has a sure and positive promise from the Spirit that his doctrine is of God, where in this sea of delusion is there

one firm rock on which we may find sure footing ?' I remembered the words of a heretic whom I had formerly deeply despised. It is the Baptist whom you also know. 'The Spirit,' he once said to me, 'does not dwell outwardly in dogma and form, but only inwardly in the *life*. There alone does it make itself seen, felt, and heard. We have a more certain knowledge of right *doing* than of right teaching. Therefore the true faith is to do God's will, not to invent dogmas about things invisible that are not of man, but of God.' At the time I thrust my fingers into my ears, so that I might not hear his blasphemous words, but in the stillness of my dungeon they returned to me. When the witch confessed that she had never seen the devil, on whose account we burned her, my heart was deeply stirred by the thought of the many uncertainties for which we do certain wrong. All our errors proceed from thinking too much of God's honor and too little of His law, talking too much about the invisible world and too little of this visible one. Because we murdered for the next world we were devout, because for the next world we lied, cheated, and led our fellow-men astray, we were acceptable to God, and because we made our lust for power and dogmatism God's cause we were to be forgiven all other sins. Anxiety about that unknown world beyond the grave has taught us to despise this visible one. To become angels in Heaven, we made ourselves ravening wolves on earth. Only when I remembered the heretic's words: 'The Spirit is revealed nowhere except in the *life*,' did the scales seem to fall from my eyes, and I resolved to leave God's doctrine to God and to do in my life what He has distinctly revealed to me in my heart and in the Scriptures."

Erastus made no reply, for Herr Belier entered with Xylander, who had called to see the physician. Ere long Felix, who of late had looked less cheerful than usual, joined the group.

"Our friend wishes to leave us," said the Huguenot. "He is going to Innsbruck to see Meister Colins, and then back to Naples. I have vainly entreated him to renounce papistry; he says he will not leave his people, and that art-loving Italy will never rise to our adoration of God in Spirit and in Truth."

"You are right," said Erastus kindly. "We cannot use the Romish Church as it now is, nor can the Italians accept ours in its present state. We are content to think out our own ideas of God and to act accordingly, the Italians desire a worship that appeals to the senses. Perhaps the time will come when this dissonance will be resolved into a higher harmony, as Lydia once suggested, when white surplices and black gowns will be as completely forgotten as are to-day Garizim and Moriah or the disputes between the Levites and Samaritans, though I fear that era is farther off than Lydia thinks. But we have the promise of a time when there will be no temple and no priest, and I believe the world will utter a sigh of relief when it buries the last theologian."

"I should myself like to stand by that grave," said Xylander eagerly. "I would inter with the humanitarian all the tools with which he has labored, his symbolic books, bishops' mitres, torches, instruments of torture, and the scrap of Sylvanus' bloody shroud which some one inspired by malice sent me the day after the poor inspector's death. They would herald down below that Calchas and Teiresias, augurs and haruspices, were

good-natured fellows compared with those who came after them. When I look back on all the blood that has flowed from the days of Constantine until now, I wish that the Church had never existed."

"No," replied Erastus, "I did not mean that we should overthrow the Church because the priests do not suit us. That would be like tearing down a house because its owner was unpopular. We need only entrust it to other hands, govern it differently, and for this new reform, which is so much needed, I know of no better fundamental principle than the one Magister Paul will henceforth preach in our churches, namely that the Spirit reveals itself outwardly only in one way — in the Life."

"I will not believe," cried Felix turning to Paul, "that you really mean to spend your days in this land of mist and waste your life, so rich in promise, in preaching fruitless sermons in bare churches, destitute of music or pictures? No, come with me. You are an Italian, you cannot live without art, and if you stay will soon begin to sing the *super flumina Babylonis*."

"No, Felix," replied Paul firmly. "As I have my choice: rather no music, no pictures, nay even no laurel groves nor gardens of the Hesperides, than a return to the old lake of sulphur."

"And do you wish to end your days as a Calvinist preacher?"

Paul was silent for a time, then answered modestly: "As soon as I recovered consciousness I daily said to myself: 'Away with the cowl. A profession which requires us to seem better than other men, easily renders us far worse than they are. But I feel that with the severe trials I have experienced many a temptation lies

behind me — and finally, tell me, what else should I become ?”

“Teacher, Magister, Doctor!” cried the artist eagerly.

Paul shook his head. “I have undergone too much that is serious to be anything but a preacher. Shall I patch up the mutilated verses of the ancient poets, or rummage among the fragments of some forgotten sophist, or investigate some other pile of learned rubbish? Whoever has endured what I have can no longer choose the ornaments of life for the pivot of his existence. My thoughts are fixed upon the kernel of life, bitter as it may be, and I will make it the substance of my work. I shall ask the elector for some quiet parish in the most remote forest-valley of his domains. There I will teach the children to clasp their little hands in prayer, show the parents how to guard their children’s hearts, strengthen the good resolutions of husbands and wives, support the weak, lead the erring back to the right paths. And if I have watched over the smallest parish in this country like a faithful shepherd, so that after my sermons its members return more cheerfully and ably to the toils and burdens of life, are more humble and submissive under its trials, better comforted in its griefs, I shall have a fuller confidence that my life has not been spent in vain, than if boys were reading my edition of a poet or doctors called a dogma by my name. I desire not fame but oblivion. Only the children and my neighbors shall know me, and I feel sure that my betrothed wife also longs for the quiet happiness of such an existence.”

Clytia leaned tenderly over him and gazed lovingly into his eyes. Felix alone was unwilling to agree that

the end of this great beginning should be a secluded Hyperborean village. The Magister laid his hand kindly on his shoulder, saying: "Dear Felix, rest assured that Pastor Paul will be far happier than Magister Laurenzano ever was, and the fame of our noble race may safely be left in your artist-hands."

"See what our new Michael Angelo has created," cried Herr Belier joyously, unrolling a plan of the new dwelling to be erected on the site of the old gable-roofed house on the market-place. A cry of admiration ran through the whole circle.

"How superbly story rises above story," said Erastus, "up to the proud gable that displays to the world the knight's armor in which our valiant friend looked so stately. And here is the shield of the Beliers and the faithful likeness of our host."

"*Mon dieu*," cried the little lady, "there's my dear parrot on my wrist. The poor sacrificial lamb which redeemed the blood from our house."

"Here, Herr Belier, I have left an open space in the frieze for your device," said Felix, delighted with the praise bestowed on him.

"That shall be as the artist elects," the chivalrous Huguenot answered. Felix bent his head in thought, and with a loving glance at Clytia, remembering his brother's hard-won happiness, he gaily seized a pencil and wrote in firm characters: "*Perstat invicta Venus!*"

THE END.

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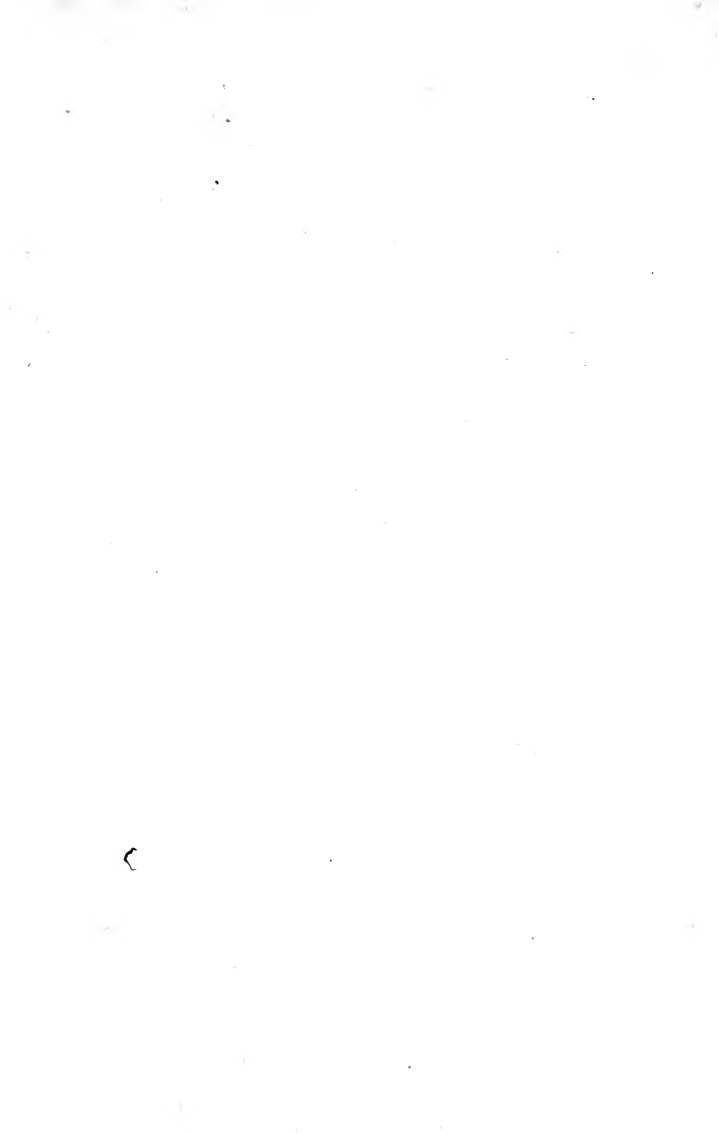
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